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The Basuto rebellion, civil war and reconstruction, 1880-1884

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THE BASUTO REBELLION, CIVIL WAR, AND RECONSTRUCTION, 1880-1884

A Thesis

Presented to the

Department of History

and the

Faculty of the Graduate College

University of Nebraska at Omaha

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

by

Douglas Gene Kagan

July 1973

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Accepted for the faculty of The Graduate College of the University of
Nebraska at Omaha, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree
Master of Arts.

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PREFACE

The author embarked on this study because most accounts of this Basuto crisis do not uncover and properly interpret the events which transpired. Historical thought on the British Empire and Commonwealth in recent years has shifted from dissemination of the "civilize the despicable and barbarous native with a gun or a Bible for the glory of the Empire" line of thought to a circulation of the "destruction of the pure and innocent native tribes by the gluttonous and malignant spread of European civilization" line of reasoning. This work, it is hoped, will illustrate the fallacies in both schools of thought in regard to Basutoland.

The basic argument in this thesis contends that the Basuto conflict was not caused by opposition of the entire tribe to disarmament but rather by civil insurrection and rebellion of one section of the tribe against lawful authority. Up to this time, there has been written no adequate history of the Basuto Rebellion, Civil War, and Reconstruction, 1880-1884. Some secondary works cited supply much of the background; other books are outdated, incomplete, or inferior studies. My thesis is intended to fill a gap in historical thought and to rectify a historical error perpetuated since 1884.

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In the preparation of this thesis, I have received generous help from a number of people. I am grateful to Dr. A. Stanley Trickett for reading the manuscript, offering many helpful suggestions, and awaiting with divine patience its completion; to Mrs. Marlene Bernstein for advice and comments, and to the authors of works cited in my footnotes.

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CHAPTER I

ADJUSTMENT OF BASUTOLAND TO EUROPEAN DOMINATION

BASUTOLAND UNDER BRITISH RULE

The Basutos did not become an organized tribe and therefore not a prominent factor in British affairs until 1818, when Moshesh, a minor chief (Infra, family tree, p. 239, Pl. XXV ; illust., p. 225, Pl. VII), unified remnants of various clans scattered by Zulu and Matabele raids. After these incursions stopped, a greater threat arose from the trekker Boers, who coveted Basuto land but refused to recognize the suzerainty of Moshesh. Chief Moshesh because of this threat continuously sought British protection, and his pleas became more plaintful as the Boers seized more of his land.¹ When a military expedition under a Major Warden from Cape Colony attempted to intimidate the tribe into accepting definite boundaries with the Boers, Moshesh smashed this force and soon after destroyed a punitive expedition commanded by a General Cathcart.²

Chief Moshesh, nevertheless, desperately sought British protection in 1868,³ and, on March 12, 1868, Basutoland became British territory;⁴ the Duke of Buckingham, then Colonial Secretary, yielding to the insistent pleas of Moshesh for protection when it appeared to London that the Boers threatened the

¹Basutoland, Report for the Year 1963 (London: HMSO, 1964), p. 123.

²Lord Hailey, The Republic of South Africa and the High Commission Territories (London: Oxford University Press, 1963), pp. 15-16.

³Austin Coates, Basutoland (London: HMSO, 1966), p. 37; Richard P. Stevens, Lesotho, Botswana, and Swaziland (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1967), pp. 24-25. Hereafter cited as Stevens, Lesotho, etc.

⁴The Basutos became British subjects but not protected persons until Basutoland received protectorate status in 1884, W. E. Simnett, The British Colonial Empire (London: Geo. Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1949), p. 108.

Basutos with extinction.⁵ Britain had not wanted to increase the financial burden of administering her Empire during this period, but the annexation of Basutoland seemed the only method to maintain a peace on the frontiers of Cape Colony and to protect the stability of the Empire.⁶ Earlier, in 1866, the Orange Free State⁷ had closed mission stations in Basuto territory after Boer commandos had overrun much of the region. Another factor leading to the annexation was growing British fear that the Boer republic would secure an east coast seaport.⁸ The Colonial Secretary at first had thought that Governor Sir Philip Wodehouse had exceeded his authority by annexing Basutoland but later advised the governor to act at his own discretion.⁹ Soon after, however, the Cape Parliament expressed some hostility to the Wodehouse actions, contending that he had exceeded his instructions. The parliament berated London for consenting to an annexation which excused the Imperial Government from financial

⁵ Great Britain, Parliament, Hansard's Parliamentary Debates, 3rd ser., Vol. 257 (1881), p. 1073, Sir Henry Holland speaking, January 20, 1881. Hereafter cited as Hansard, etc.; Great Britain, Parliament, Sessional Papers (House of Commons), (1883), XLVIII: "Correspondence Respecting the Affairs of Basutoland," 330, Mr. Wood speaking on a memorandum of the Basutos in the House of Representatives. Hereafter cited as B.S.P., (date), etc.

⁶ Margaret L. Hodgson and W. G. Ballinger, Indirect Rule in Southern Africa, (No. 1) Basutoland (Lovedale, Cape Colony: Lovedale Press, 1931), p. 7. Hereafter cited as Hodgson and Ballinger, Indirect Rule.

⁷ Orange Free State: This Boer republic bordered Cape Colony on the north and Basutoland on the north and west, Eric Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia of Southern Africa (London: 1961), p. 374. Hereafter cited as Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia.

⁸ Stevens, Lesotho, etc., pp. 23-24; J. Du Plessis, A History of Christian Missions in South Africa (Cape Town: C. Struik, 1965), p. 317. Hereafter cited as Du Plessis, Christian Missions in South Africa.

⁹ George M. Theal, History of South Africa from 1795 to 1872, Vol. VIII of "History of South Africa," (11 vols., 4th ed., rev.; Cape Town: C. Struik, 1964), p. 313: Being originally Vol. IV of History of South Africa from 1795 to 1872 (4th ed., rev.; London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1919). Hereafter cited as Theal, South Africa. ✓

or military demands.¹⁰ Most South Africans believed that this almost total reversal of existing Imperial policy only served to protect obnoxious tribesmen from deserved punishment and was detrimental to the Orange Free State. Only a small minority perceived the action as not hostile to the Free State and felt that the annexation was beneficial.¹¹ The annexation, nevertheless, remained a fact. The proclamation of annexation was declared at Cape Town; details regarding the future of Basuto territory were spared for future consideration, with the natives told that they could discuss detailed provisions with the Cape Colony Governor in his capacity as High Commissioner of South Africa.¹²

The British initially had authorized Governor Sir Philip Wodehouse¹³ of Cape Colony to administer the territory temporarily. London attempted to evade further financial responsibility, for a lack of funds was already limiting Colonial Office involvement in the administration of areas of native settlement to coastal cities and surrounding districts. Richard Stevens agrees with the British assumption that Basutoland was under direct British control only until the death of Moshesh, that later, either Natal or Cape Colony would

¹⁰ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 330, Mr. Wood speaking.

¹¹ Theal, South Africa, VIII, 302-03.

¹² B.S.P., (1880), LI: "Affairs of Basutoland," 600, ltr. Earl of Kimberley to Governor Sir Bartle Frere, May 20, 1880.

¹³ Eric Rosenthal, comp., Southern African Dictionary of National Biography (London: 1966), p. 422. Hereafter cited as S.A.D.N.B. Sir Philip Wodehouse: Born in England, Wodehouse became Governor's Agent for the West Province of Ceylon in 1843. In 1851, he was appointed Superintendent of British Honduras, and three years later he became Governor of British Guiana. He helped settle the long conflict between the Basutos and Boers in 1869. After fighting against responsible government at Cape Colony, Wodehouse left to assume the post of Governor of Bombay in 1872.

assume administrative and financial responsibility for native territories on the frontier.¹⁴ According to Austin Coates, Sir Philip opposed Basuto annexation to Natal.¹⁵

In that British administration aided the Basutos at the expense of the Boers, the Orange Free State thought itself at the mercy of Sir Philip, who, though blamed by some influential Englishmen for allowing the Boers to mistreat the natives, had allowed the Basutos to rear and also unjustly had reversed the situation won in the wars against these mischievous and aggressor natives.¹⁶ Wodehouse had interfered in one of these conflicts in 1868 by sending colonial troops into Basutoland.¹⁷ The Basutos had welcomed this intervention, because, otherwise, the Boers would have scattered the natives into Kaffraria, a native region in Cape Colony, forcing Basutos to live on charity¹⁸ and perhaps forcing Moshesh to raid European settlements.¹⁹ The Free State, inhibited by the British and therefore anxious to end the wars, reluctantly recognized the annexation and signed with the Basutos the Second Treaty of Aliwal North in 1869, by which all conquered territory east of the Caledon River reverted to Basutoland.²⁰ The British annexation ended the Boer retaliation.

¹⁴ Stevens, Lesotho, etc., pp. 24-25; George M. Theal, The South Africa Republic from 1870 to 1872, Vol. IX of "History of South Africa," (11 vols., 4th ed., rev.; Cape Town: C. Struik, 1964), p. 67: Being originally Vol. V of History of South Africa from 1795 to 1872 (3rd ed., rev.; London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1920). Hereafter cited as Theal, South Africa.

¹⁵ Coates, Basutoland, p. 37.

¹⁶ Theal, South Africa, VIII, 318, 305; B.S.P., (1880), LI, 601, ltr. Kimberley to Frere, May 20, 1880.

¹⁷ Du Plessis, Christian Missions in South Africa, p. 317.

¹⁸ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 598, ltr. William Ayliffe, Secretary for Native Affairs, to J. Gordon Sprigg, Prime Minister of Cape Colony, April 12, 1880.

¹⁹ Hodgson and Ballinger, Indirect Rule, p. 7.

²⁰ Stevens, Lesotho, etc., p. 24.

tion against the Basutos but not Basuto raids into the Free State.²¹

Regarding the confusion surrounding the provisions of the annexation, one member of the British Parliament alleged that Moshesh wanted Basutoland to be an exclusive native reserve and his tribe dependent upon the High Commissioner only.²² A proclamation issued by Governor Napier of Cape Colony on September 7, 1842, promised that Britain would disallow European ownership of Basuto land.²³ Since 1843, the British repeatedly had assured Moshesh of his right to the lands of his people under grants of terminable leases.²⁴ After the annexation, the chief, naturally, bargained with Natal and Cape Colony for the best arrangements for continued protection²⁵ and was assuming that Basutoland was not held in possession by the Crown. The natives feared that the British would surrender Basuto territory to outsiders, as previously had been done for the benefit of the Orange Free State. The British were claiming absolute possession of the country based on the fact that colonial Government Blue Books failed to show Basutoland restricted to only natives. Basutoland, advised Wodehouse, had devolved directly to the Crown,²⁶ and Government documents of

²¹ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 330, Mr. Wood speaking.

²² Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 257 (1881), 1074. Sir Henry Holland speaking, January 20, 1881.

²³ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI: "The Affairs of Basutoland," 174, Cape Argus reporting on Mr. Orpen speaking in the June 30, 1880, House Assembly session.

²⁴ All Basuto land belonged to the people with the paramount chief as trustee. He controlled its use, distribution, and was responsible for its protection, Hugh Ashton, The Basuto (London: Oxford University Press, 1952), p. 144.

²⁵ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 178, Cape Argus reporting on Mr. Solomon speaking in the House Assembly, July 1, 1880; Theal, South Africa, VIII, 315.

²⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 174-75, Cape Argus reporting on Mr. Orpen and the Attorney-General speaking in the House Assembly, July 1, 1880. Coates maintains that Wodehouse wanted Basutoland governed as a separate native state and that the Colonial Office later agreed, Coates, Basutoland, p. 37.

communication between Sir Philip and Moshesh mentioned the absolute cession of Basuto territory to the Queen.²⁷ In contrast to this interpretation, the Earl of Kimberley,²⁸ the new Colonial Secretary in 1880, considered Basutoland practically a native reserve and presumed that Wodehouse, in order to end border skirmishes and to demarcate for the Basutos their territory, felt likewise.²⁹

Concerning native feelings and objectives, since the disastrous War of 1865 with the Boers, the Basuto economy had become basically agricultural, supplemented by increased service to whites. Basutos had expected to receive back all their land after the war, but instead the tribe had lost its best pasturage and farmland.³⁰ Lack of land had left the Basutos disappointed and provided a source of friction.³¹ Under the Aliwal Treaty, the governor instead of the paramount chief assigned land to clans and individuals. Most of the chiefs detested this treaty, and many of them refused to move from ceded lands,

²⁷ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 563-64, ltr. Undersecretary for Native Affairs Bright to Adolphe Mabille, February 26, 1880.

²⁸ Who Was Who 1897-1915 (London: 1935), pp. 397-98. Earl of Kimberley: John Wodehouse, 1st Earl of Kimberley, was born in England in 1826. He was Undersecretary for Foreign Affairs from 1852-56, from 1859-61, and from 1894-95. Undersecretary of the India Office in 1864, he became Lord-Lieutenant of Ireland from 1864-66, during which time he acted firmly against the Fenians. Kimberley was Lord of the Privy Seal from 1868-70, Secretary of State for the Colonies from 1870-74 and from 1880-82, and Secretary for Foreign Affairs from 1894-95. He became the leader of the Liberal Party in the House of Lords in 1897 and Chancellor of London University in 1899 after service as a member of its Senate since 1859; Clarence L. Barnhart, ed., The New Century Cyclopedia of Names (New York: 1954), Vol. III, 4158. As Colonial Secretary, Kimberley formed Rupert's Land into the Province of Manitoba and brought British Columbia into Canada. Kimberley, South Africa, was named for him in 1872, and the earl upheld self-government for the Boers in South Africa in 1881.

²⁹ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 601, ltr. Kimberley to Frere, May 20, 1880.

³⁰ Stevens, Lesotho, etc., pp. 24-25.

³¹ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 601, ltr. Kimberley to Frere, May 20, 1880; Theal, South Africa, VIII, 323.

from which they ceaselessly raided Boer farms in the Free State for cattle. Boer farmers did not pursue the natives back across the Basuto border for fear of antagonizing the British, whose rule over the tribe they thought too lenient.³² The Basutos, secretly bellicose since before the War of 1865, waited for an opportunity to begin a quarrel between their white neighbors.³³

Regarding different accounts of the French missionary attitude towards the then current political events, George M. Theal, noted South African historian of the Settler School, contends that the Aborigines Protection Society³⁴ and French mission facilitated native disregard for the Aliwal treaty and thus perpetuated crime and anarchy.³⁵ The Boers, notes J. Du Plessis, after the War of 1865 expelled the French from Basutoland temporarily after the missionaries indignantly refused counsel from the Free State Volksraad. Du Plessis found no reliable evidence to prove Boer charges that these missionaries had interfered in political affairs and had become a menace to the republic but rather discovered that the mission attempted to promote peace.³⁶ The French, said Sir Bartle Frere, later Governor of Cape Colony, encouraged the Basutos to accept British annexation provisions.³⁷

³²Theal, South Africa, VIII, 306, 314, 322, 324-27; IX, 65.

³³Du Plessis, Christian Missions in South Africa, p. 315.

³⁴Aborigines Protection Society (frequently referred to in the following text as APS): This English philanthropical society founded by Sir T. F. Buxton in 1837 sought to protect indigenous native tribes from extermination by white men or from other causes, C. E. Carrington, Making of the Empire, Pt. I of "The British Overseas" (Cambridge, England: University Press, 1968), p. 298. The zeal of the organization outstripped its knowledge and discretion, Eric A. Walker, The British Empire (2nd ed.; Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1956), p. 107.

³⁵Theal, South Africa, VIII, 325.

³⁶Du Plessis, Christian Missions in South Africa, pp. 317-18.

³⁷B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 201, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, July 27, 1880.

The British, aside from the French influence, never adequately enforced their rule, and conflict of authority arose. The Imperial Government introduced indirect rule through the amenable Chief Moshesh,³⁸ who wanted benefits of British rule without the regulations, interference, or responsibilities. London administered Basutoland at a profit, but anarchy reigned. The chiefs were disgruntled over loss of so much land to the Free State and thought their positions as chiefs ignored. They wanted only protection from the British, for themselves they desired territory for expansion and retention of all possible authority.³⁹ Moshesh had consolidated his rule during tribal adjustment to annexation but never had dominated absolutely. Important tribal decisions required the opinions of the royal family and other chiefs at a pitso.⁴⁰ The renowned "Laws of Moshesh" prohibited the sale of liquor, punished witchcraft, and forbade white settlement in the country.⁴¹ British arrests of chiefs who

³⁸Coates, Basutoland, p. 40.

³⁹Theal, South Africa, IX, 56, 63-64, 66, 68; VIII, 311; Coates, Basutoland, p. 35.

⁴⁰Pitso: A meeting called by a chief or chiefs to which all adult males were invited to discuss matters already debated by a chief or chiefs and councilors, Ashton, The Basuto, pp. 215-16; Chiefs, of prime importance in the leadership of the tribe, could delegate authority to subordinate chiefs, sub-chiefs, and headmen. A few advisers, mostly relatives, guided a chief. A proper, generous, and brave leader was one who accepted advice freely from councilors. Deciding minor matters by himself, a chief, after meeting with his councilors, discussed more important issues with his people at a pitso. The chief could announce a decision at the end of a pitso but would not persist in an issue facing stiff opposition. Dissatisfied natives could join another chief or set up another clan under a more popular man, such as a younger brother or son of the clan leader. In critical circumstances, dissidents might murder their chief. The Basutos, remarked one French missionary, almost superstitiously worshipped chiefs with a reverence that paralleled the divine right of kings. Such reverence for their chiefs, without who the native community would doubtlessly become anarchic, did not excuse the failings of leaders or prevent tribesmen from joining another chief. Ibid., pp. 144, 215-17, 220.

⁴¹Stevens, Lesotho, etc., p. 26.

stole cattle caused animosity to British justice, as cattle thievery was deeply ingrained in tribal custom. Officials continued to strictly enforce neither British nor Basuto law, however, except to halt liquor traffic. Gun smugglers freely roamed the countryside and reaped huge profits. The chiefs acted as they pleased. Despite 100 policemen temporarily stationed in Basutoland, clan quarrels erupted, and, as time passed, numerous Basutos thought they had gained nothing as British subjects.⁴²

The British annexation, in conclusion, should have involved more precision so that all parties fully would have understood the compact. The annexation seemed not to protect the Basutos from the Boers so much as to guard Cape Colony from refugee Basutos. Indirect rule was inadequate and too permissive for the deceitful Basutos, and worse, the British refused to support their own actions decisively. Britain owned Basutoland; it was not a native reserve. The tribe ungratefully chafed under agreed procedures once the merited Boer threat dissipated. The Boers themselves incurred a disadvantage strategically and deserved to retain more of their spoils.

BASUTOLAND UNDER CAPE COLONY RULE

The Cape legislature, as expected by London, outmaneuvered Natal and annexed Basutoland on August 10, 1871. The colony did not directly incorporate Basutoland, unlike British administration in Kaffraria. The governor, subject to parliamentary veto, became the legislative authority.⁴³ With full knowledge

⁴²Theal, South Africa, VIII, 315-16, 322; IX, 63; Ashton, The Basuto, p. 172.

of its responsibilities,⁴⁴ Cape Colony annexed Basutoland from a grateful Britain, which encouraged extension of the successful colonial native policy to the Basutos.⁴⁵ Colonial decrees did not apply to Basutoland unless specified or subject to proclamation by the governor. Basutos, assumed Governor Sir Henry Barkly, realized that colonial annexation would come eventually, and the appropriation, which the natives comprehended, gave them no unfair burden.⁴⁶ Barkly in early 1871 had visited Letsie,⁴⁷ the eldest son of Moshesh and paramount chief after the death of his father in 1870, and had warned him of the impending decision by Cape Colony to annex Basutoland.⁴⁸ On August 16, 1871, a pitso called by Basuto chiefs learned of the annexation, which did not alter their tribal status, and no natives objected to the decision.⁴⁹ While Colonial Secretary Kimberley agreed that the attainment of responsible government⁵⁰ at

⁴³ Edgar H. Brookes, The History of Native Policy in South Africa from 1830 to the Present Day (Pretoria: J. L. Van Schaik Ltd., 1927), p. 99. Hereafter cited as Brookes, History of Native Policy.

⁴⁴ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 330, Mr. Wood speaking.

⁴⁵ Walker, The British Empire, p. 64.

⁴⁶ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 257 (1881), 1075-76, Lord Holland speaking, January 20, 1881.

⁴⁷ S.A.D.N.B., p. 215. Letsie: His son Lerothodi soon relegated this weak and colorless chief; Theal contends that only British authority prevented the brothers of Letsie from declaring independence from him, Theal, South Africa, IX, 60.

⁴⁸ Stevens, Lesotho, etc., p. 26.

⁴⁹ Theal, South Africa, IX, 69.

⁵⁰ In British constitutional machinery, responsible government is distinguished from representative government by the need for the executive to retain the confidence of the majority in parliament and receive parliamentary permission for all expenditures and all executive actions. Therefore, a government must resign or hold elections if it fails to get support from the legislature. Under representative government in Cape Colony from 1854-72, the executive acted independently of the legislature, Hector M. Robertson, South Africa (London: Cambridge University Press, 1957), p. 140.

Cape Town allowed the governor most authority in Basuto matters, he felt that the natives had been neither notified nor consulted on the annexation and that Basutos believed that London still directly ruled them.⁵¹

The 1871 annexation in fact caused immediate controversy. The annexation bill met stiff initial resistance in Cape Colony, as its Government allegedly had neither the experience nor resources to deal with Basutoland, and some colonial politicians resented the burden. Joseph Orpen,⁵² a life-time friend of Moshesh, persuaded reluctant Letsie to petition for direct representation in the Cape Parliament, although the Basutos wanted only a voice in considering legal measures applied to them. Representation would subject Basutoland to all colonial laws and European ownership of land, which the "Laws of Moshesh" and the present chiefs would not accept. The Cape Parliament rejected the petition.⁵³ The Act of 1871 did not recognize the right of Basuto chiefs to cede or negotiate tribal land belonging to individuals, although tribal property had no registered titles, and although the chiefs always had ruled supreme in land matters.⁵⁴

Application of colonial native policy under the 1871 statute became bog-

⁵¹ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 257 (1881), 1066-67, Sir Wilfrid Lawson speaking, January 20, 1881.

⁵² S.A.D.N.E., p. 280. Joseph Orpen: Born in Dublin, Orpen emigrated to South Africa in 1846 where he fought in several native wars. In 1850, he became a government surveyor. In 1853, he was elected to the first Volksraad of the Orange Free State, helped write a constitution, served on the Free State Supreme Court, and negotiated with Chief Moshesh. After serving as Chief Magistrate in Basutoland, he won election to the Cape Parliament in 1871. In 1873, he moved to St. John's Territory on the Transkei coast to serve as British Resident Magistrate.

⁵³ Coates, Basutoland, pp. 39-40; Stevens, Lesotho, etc., p. 27.

⁵⁴ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 175-76, Cape Argus reporting on the Attorney-General speaking in the House Assembly, July 1, 1880.

ged down in a quagmire. John X. Merriman, Charles Brownlee, and Colonel Charles Griffith had formulated a unique system for native policy in South Africa which failed in Basutoland because of magistrate mistakes, ignorance of colonial politicians, party politics, and changes of government. Critics questioned the rapid spread of magistrate authority which had belonged to the chiefs. The Basutos were stubborn; thus, this transition required time. Most judicial cases gravitated to the chiefs because of active or passive coercion; thus, few natives appealed to the magistrates. A chief could "eat up"⁵⁵ an appellant, and the magistrates had no power to correct this injustice. A chief, only if he wanted relief from the routine of presiding, assented to the native tendency to bring legal matters to a magistrate, but if magistrate confronted chief, tribesmen backed the chief. Colonial rule, however, reformed and revised other native customs.

These alterations may seem liberal and enlightened, yet they undermined the entire Basuto legal and social structure. Administrators made no effort to conciliate public opinion and made sudden reforms which should have awaited mollification of the public. Natives considered marriage and cattle matters private; these affairs should have remained so. One beneficial measure sought in vain to halt the letsima--forced labor for the chiefs. Surprisingly, the natives seemed more attached to their chiefs than averse to this work. In an attempt to enlighten the magistrates, a commission compiled a handbook of Basuto customs in 1873. This hurried and mediocre effort made some erroneous conclusions on native life, and regulations already in force further hamstrung

⁵⁵"Eat up": Refers to a Basuto custom by which a chief could deprive an offender of livestock, land, home, and sometimes life, B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 201.

innovations. The speed with which the Government collected a hut tax of 10s. a year directly correlated with the kickbacks retained by the chiefs for collecting it. This adequate allowance reconciled them somewhat to magistrate jurisdiction. Unfortunately, the hut tax rose too soon to £1 a year, and, though common enough procedure today, this tax hike did not constitute diplomatic procedure in native policy. The tribe became sullen.⁵⁶

Governor Barkly, nevertheless, in the mid-1870's declared, among the positive impressions, that the approximately 150,000 Basutos who only a few years before had terrorized their neighbors now resided in a peaceful, contented, and prosperous manner under the guidance of six European magistrates who for some time had no European police protection.⁵⁷ Barkly had formed a Basuto police force of eleven officers and 100 privates in 1872.⁵⁸ A model farm and schools appeared, and surplus revenue from taxation enabled construction of roads and bridges to facilitate trade.⁵⁹ Officials easily detected cattle theft, settled neighborhood squabbles, and magistrates, schools, and some churches worked together for progress.⁶⁰ The Basuto government functioned orderly, economic conditions were good, and public revenue gleaned mostly from the hut tax rose to £18,000 in 1879.⁶¹

⁵⁶Brookes, History of Native Policy, pp. 100-03; Theal, South Africa, IX, 71, 74, 76, 79.

⁵⁷P. A. Molteno, The Life and Times of Sir John Charles Molteno, II (London: Smith, Elder & Co., 1900), p. 424. Hereafter cited as Molteno, Molteno.

⁵⁸Theal, South Africa, IX, 77.

⁵⁹B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 229, ltr. Bright to Griffith, February 26, 1880.

⁶⁰B.S.P., (1880), LI, 600, ltr. Kimberley to Frere, May 20, 1880.

⁶¹Stevens, Lesotho, etc., p. 27; George M. Theal, History of South Africa from 1873 to 1884, Vol. XI of "History of South Africa," (11 vols., 4th ed.,

Some authors, to the contrary, observed alleged colonial mistakes and Basuto displeasure. The Cape Government did not realize the evils of its hasty and injudicious actions, says A. Aylward, and Governor Sir Bartle Frere,⁶² successor to Barkly, replied to Basuto complaints by advising the tribe to migrate to Zululand.⁶³ The Chief Magistrate of Basutoland offended the natives by making Chiefs Masupha and Molappo appear equal to Letsie. By 1875, Basutoland had become a granary instead of a pasturage, as overmuch cultivated land curtailed sufficient grazing for tribal cattle. Land hunger was evident the next year, and Basutos complained that their land had not supported them since 1869. The natives paid taxes without representation, and surplus funds taken without their consent filled the colonial treasury. Numerous natives believed without substantiation that sale of Basuto property at the magistracies was contrary to tribal law and custom and against the conditions of British annexation. Knowing the wealth of Basutoland, traders moved there in droves. It was a mistaken notion, continues Aylward, to believe that Europeanization could transform a savage into a civilized being. A pagan reaction set in,

rev.; London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1964), p. 55: Being originally Vol. II of History of South Africa from 1873 to 1884 (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1919). Hereafter cited as Theal, South Africa.

⁶²S.A.D.N.B., pp. 129-30. Sir Bartle Frere: Born in England in 1815, Frere became Governor and High Commissioner of Cape Colony in 1877. Adverse English criticism surrounded his native policy, especially that towards the Zulus. He sanctioned the annexation of the Transvaal but promised to alleviate Boer grievances. The colonists supported the Frere programs, and his recall in 1880 angered them. He published a defense of his policies in 1881 and forewarned of the First Anglo-Boer War.

⁶³A. Aylward, "Basuto," Fraser's Magazine, March, 1882, p. 339; S.A.D.N.B., p. 12. Alfred Aylward: Aylward, alias Murphy, was a South African adventurer associated with the Fenian movement, and in the 1860's he helped lead the diamond laborers on the Vaal River who wanted to establish a republic. He then moved to the Transvaal to fight in the Sekukuni War and to aid the Boer cause.

heathen ceremonies resumed, and children quit school. Missionaries complained to Cape Town that the chiefs instigated the retrogression in order to preserve ancient modes to sustain tribal authority and hereditary power against encroachments by European magistrates and law.⁶⁴ The Cape Government, failing to support its few Basuto officials, never established absolute control over Basutoland.⁶⁵

The natives undoubtedly were severely restricted domestically. Basutoland was the most heavily populated territory in South Africa, and natives cultivated all the arable land.⁶⁶ But only a small portion of Basutoland was habitable: a strip, unequally fertile, 1 to 20 miles wide, and 150 miles long. In such cramped circumstances, the Basutos with difficulty adjusted to European restrictions, particularly when suffering from a severe drought in 1879.⁶⁷ Because of uncontrolled grazing, land in numerous parts above arable areas became empty of grass cover.⁶⁸

Regarding conclusions at this point, the Earl of Kimberley was mistaken in his interpretation, as the tribe wanted control of its destiny in parliament but selfishly wanted to remain independent with preferential treatment.

⁶⁴ Edwin W. Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland (London: Hodder and Stoughton Ltd., 1939), pp. 247-48.

⁶⁵ Eric A. Walker, ed., South Africa, Rhodesia, and the High Commission Territories, Vol. VIII of "The Cambridge History of the British Empire," (8 vols., 2nd ed.; London: Cambridge University Press, 1963), p. 490. Hereafter cited as Walker, ed., South Africa.

⁶⁶ A. Gordon-Brown, ed., The Yearbook and Guide to Southern Africa (1958 ed.; London: Robert Hale Ltd., 1958), p. 202.

⁶⁷ C. W. De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor in South Africa (London: Frank Cass & Co., Ltd., 1965), pp. 263-65. Hereafter cited as De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor.

⁶⁸ Basutoland, Report for the Year 1963, p. 122.

Secondly, Basutoland, if directly incorporated, would have contracted more severe restrictions to its voice in its government; the tribe already had adequate legislative representation. The chiefs used maladjustment to colonial rule to stir up dissension when actually tribal obnoxiousness had caused the loss of so much land. Next, Cape Colony should have studied more carefully Basuto culture before promoting Europeanization. Europeanization, nevertheless, helped to pacify and civilize the tribe, which now had an opportunity to prosper.

BASUTO LABOR IN THE DIAMOND FIELDS

As previously mentioned, the Basuto economy depended somewhat on service to whites. The growth of the Kimberley diamond fields provided profitable employment for Basutos, who migrated there to secure a cash salary. Although the Basuto chiefs supposedly voiced opposition to this service,⁶⁹ Governor Frere countered that the chiefs instructed their men not to return from the fields until they had earned a gun and ammunition.⁷⁰ The native workers, following such chiefly advice because they feared the future, helped Basutoland gain the reputation as the "powder magazine" of South Africa.⁷¹ Basutos prized guns and worked diligently to buy them.⁷² The policies of the Cape Government and the

⁶⁹Stevens, Lesotho, etc., p. 27.

⁷⁰Sir Bartle Frere, "The Basutos and the Constitution of the Cape of Good Hope," The Nineteenth Century, IX (Jan.-June, 1881), 181. Hereafter cited as Frere, "The Basutos . . . Cape of Good Hope."

⁷¹Hailey, The Republic of South Africa and the High Commission Territories, p. 19; Coates, Basutoland, p. 40.

⁷²Theal, South Africa, IX, 81.

mine companies stimulated the armaments trade and thereby assured a large revenue,⁷³ because Basutos had to accept guns instead of money.⁷⁴ Cecil Rhodes noted that natives would walk 100 miles to earn wages to buy the "white man's magic," yet he failed to emphasize that guns were the white man's major enticement for workers to come to the diamond fields.⁷⁵

Thus, while the diamond fields generously provided a beneficial source of employment, the natives intentionally armed themselves with guns and allowed the chiefs to sustain despotism.

THE QUTHING QUESTION

The Basuto hoarding of guns only made more ominous the later native grievances about overcrowding. Morosi, chief of the Baphutis in Quthing⁷⁶ (Infra, map, p. 234, Pl. XX), sought and received British protection in 1870,⁷⁷ but suddenly the chief became restless. Chief Magistrate Charles Griffith⁷⁸ of Ba-

⁷³ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 252 (1880), 453-54, Mr. Lyulph Stanley speaking, May 25, 1880.

⁷⁴ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 257 (1881), 1068, Sir Wilfrid Lawson speaking, January 20, 1881.

⁷⁵ Sarah G. Millin, Rhodes (Rev. ed.; London: Chatto & Windus, 1952), pp. 47-48.

⁷⁶ The Baphutis consisted of two tribes. The first were original Baphutis; the second were Matsitsi. Both were of Zulu origin, though each originated from different areas, J. C. MacGregor, Basuto Traditions (Cape Town: C. Struik, 1905), p. 46.

⁷⁷ Theal, South Africa, IX, 61-62.

⁷⁸ S.A.D.N.B.; p. 150. Chief Magistrate Griffith: Colonel Charles D. Griffith was a British soldier and administrator. An emigrant from England to Cape Colony, he fought in the War of the Axe in 1846, in the 1851 Kaffir War, and was inspector in the Frontier Armed and Mounted Police in 1852. He received citations in the Tembuland campaign and in 1871 became Chief Magistrate of Basutoland.

sutoland requested the help of Letsie in settling the problem with Morosi. Chief Letsie in vain sent messengers to dissuade Morosi from rebellious action, and, on March 8, 1879, a party of Basutos, probably at the instigation of Morosi, raided across the border into Cape Colony. Griffith arrived there with 2,000 loyal Basuto tribesmen immediately after the skirmish.⁷⁹ Unaware of possible consequences, Prime Minister J. Gordon Sprigg⁸⁰ of Cape Colony mobilized the Basutos against Morosi.⁸¹ One Basuto tribesman said that the chief had discerned the Zulu successes and that his own rebellion provided an opportunity for him to escape punishment. Morosi did not consider himself a British subject or subservient to Letsie, and he told his people that the Basutos would support them in rebellion,⁸² which seemed unlikely, for the Basutos did not hold the Baphutis in high esteem.⁸³

John Martineau, furthermore, believes that British decisions at this juncture did irreparable harm. Missionaries advising Zulu Chief Cetewayo exaggerated the report of the British military disaster at Isandhlwana in Zululand, and the rumor spread among all the South African natives. The British army supposedly had suffered total destruction and could no longer maintain

⁷⁹B.S.P., (1880), LI, 551, ltr. APS to Colonial Office, April 5, 1879.

⁸⁰S.A.D.N.B., p. 357. Prime Minister Sprigg: Sir John Gordon Sprigg was born in England. He became a shorthand clerk at Gurney and taunted the Parliament. In 1853, he visited Cape Colony and decided to remain. A prominent dairy and sheep farmer, he served as MP for East London in the House Assembly in 1869. Governor Frere asked him to form a cabinet in 1878 to replace Sir John Molteno. Prime Minister until 1881, he was Colonial Treasurer from 1884-86, and from 1886-90 served again as Prime Minister and Colonial Treasurer.

⁸¹G. Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto (Cape Town: Juta & Co., Ltd., 1950), p. 131.

⁸²B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 234, 240, ltr. Mofetude to Magistrate John Austen, March 3, 1880.

⁸³Aylward, "Basuto," p. 338.

control. Two regiments marching through Basutoland could have dissolved the rumor quickly, the moral effect produced would have outweighed the fractional expenditure, and Britain might have averted the future Basuto crisis. But Sir Garnet Wolseley,⁸⁴ Commander-in-Chief of all South African Imperial troops, denied the request of Frere for this march, just as he refused to dispatch 200-300 British infantry to help attack Morosi. Colonial troops alone stormed the rebel Baphuti stronghold on November 20, 1879, suffering a much greater loss in men and money than otherwise necessary.⁸⁵ The Baphutis, morally sapped, were completely dispersed.⁸⁶

The native police under a white officer, moreover, were the only Basutos who fought earnestly in the mountain assault. The operation provided Lerothodi⁸⁷ (*Infra*, illust., p. 226, Pl. IX), son of Letsie, with a superb view of a European attack covered by desultory Basuto gunfire, and he noted the quality of the colonial forces which he soon would battle.⁸⁸ The tribe feigned loyalty by assisting the troops but later would use the training gained to direct their

⁸⁴ *S.A.D.N.B.*, p. 423. Sir Garnet Wolseley: Field-Marshal Viscount Garnet J. Wolseley was born in Dublin. In the British army he served in Burma, the Crimea, India, and China. He smashed the Red River rebellion in Canada in 1870, then led an expedition against the Ashantis in 1873. Wolseley almost replaced Lord Chelmsford during the Zulu War and captured Chief Cetewayo. He became Governor of Natal, then as Governor of the Transvaal wrote a new constitution for that colony. He failed to relieve in time General Gordon at Khartoum. Wolseley implemented many reforms in the army, despite opposition. Thereafter, he became Commander-in-Chief of the British army from 1895-99.

⁸⁵ John Martineau, *The Life and Correspondence of Sir Bartle Frere*, II (London: John Murray, 1895), p. 348. Hereafter cited as Martineau, *Frere*.

⁸⁶ Tylden, *The Rise of the Basuto*, p. 137.

⁸⁷ *S.A.D.N.B.*, p. 214. Lerothodi: Son of Letsie I, who he succeeded in 1891, Lerothodi had great capability and was responsible for the creation of the Basuto National Council.

⁸⁸ Tylden, *The Rise of the Basuto*, pp. 132-33.

weapons against the colony.⁸⁹ No doubt the Basutos thought they could evade future disarmament by aiding the troops.⁹⁰

The major point to examine involved disposal of land overrun by troops in Quthing. Sprigg at first did not allow Basutos to settle in the area,⁹¹ which was attached administratively to Basutoland.⁹² Moshesh never completely had conquered the area, and Morosi had pledged only nominal allegiance to him. The Cape Prime Minister and Secretary for Native Affairs visited Quthing and after much consideration agreed to divide the land into individual lots for sale by auction to whites and blacks. This action would give the Basutos an opportunity to buy land and would place orderly farms in a frontier area then sparsely populated, though capable of supporting a large agricultural population.⁹³

Some Basuto chiefs and Europeans who disliked this decision asserted that Wodehouse had promised Moshesh that Quthing would become an integral part of Basutoland. Sir Bartle countered that he could find no record of such an agreement. The chiefs wanted to select people for Quthing settlements and thereby manipulate the feelings of their subjects in order to retain as much of their wilting chiefly power as possible. Chief Letsie argued that his tribe readily helped isolate Morosi; thus, he hoped that the overpopulated Basutos could occupy all Quthing. Basutos, thought Frere, had displayed insufficient loyalty in the Morosi campaign and therefore did not warrant a land

⁸⁹ Aylward, "Basuto," p. 339.

⁹⁰ Theal, South Africa, XI, 45.

⁹¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 257, ltr. Sprigg to Griffith, November 23, 1879.

⁹² B.S.P., (1880), LI, 582-83, Minutes of Frere, January 3, 1880.

⁹³ Ibid., 581-82, ltr. Frere to Secretary of State for the Colonies, Sir Michael Hicks-Beach, March 18, 1880; Theal, South Africa, XI, 42, 57-58.

reward from the forfeited rebel territory. No rights existed or warranted recognition that allowed a distant chief, such as Letsie, or group to occupy property forfeited from a related clan. Basutos never wholly had occupied Quthing, an area largely inhabited by Baphutis and Moputis. Sir Bartle thought that land sales by auction would repay Cape Colony for war expenditures. He also challenged the dissenting Chief Magistrate Griffith to find a Wodehouse statement that promised exclusion of all other tribes from Basutoland proper in the future, but the governor reassured Letsie that his tribe would not lose its own land. If Basutos felt crowded, they could settle with the assistance of their magistrate on empty lands further south along the Orange River.

In spite of reassurances by Frere, Griffith, upon whom the Basutos looked as their guardian⁹⁴ and savior from the Boers,⁹⁵ said that the deprivation of Quthing would alienate the Basuto tribe and cause it to think it would lose all its land. Also, Europeans in that rugged district would feel isolated and unprotected, panic, and become useless for defense. A letter found by Griffith sent from Moshesh to Wodehouse and dated April 21, 1868, referred to a law proposed that would make illegal alienation of land then occupied by the Basutos.⁹⁶ The 1868 annexation proclamation unfortunately had not defined Basuto borders.⁹⁷

Sprigg, in the legislative debates, offered a resolution in the House

⁹⁴ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 586, ltr. Letsie to Griffith, December 9, 1879; Ibid., 582-83, Minutes of Frere, January 3, 1880.

⁹⁵ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 177.

⁹⁶ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 584-85, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, November 27, 1879.

⁹⁷ Theal, South Africa, VIII, 304.

Assembly that European farms fill part of Quthing, with Basutos or other natives filling the large remainder. He argued that Griffith wanted Quthing for only the Basutos because of expediency, power to select the occupants, and a promise to give Basutos land if they aided against Morosi. Griffith denied the last accusation.⁹⁸ Another member, Mr. Orpen, thought that a law must acknowledge that Quthing belonged to the Crown and that the district could not devolve to Letsie, and the Attorney-General of the colony believed that Letsie had no rights in the district.⁹⁹

The Earl of Kimberley, the ultimate authority, favored the Griffith proposals and thought that the Frere policy destroyed the atmosphere of isolation in which Basutoland was governed. The secretary warned that Quthing, because of Frere actions, might attract a considerable settlement of whites in the immediate vicinity of dense Basuto localities. Colonel Griffith in 1878 had persuaded Kimberley that in other areas of Cape Colony, integration of the races caused native drunkenness, cattle thievery, and black degradation. Though the immediate responsibility of dealing with Cape Colony natives, continued Kimberley, still rested with the colonial ministers,¹⁰⁰ the earl advised that, after the Cape Mounted Rifles¹⁰¹ garrison in Quthing had routed squatters,

⁹⁸The Paris Evangelical Society alleged that Griffith told the tribe that it would lose title to Quthing by not fighting Morosi, B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 703.

⁹⁹Ibid., 176-80, Cape House Assembly, June 30; 1880.

¹⁰⁰B.S.P., (1880), LI, 599-600, ltr. Kimberley to Frere, May 20, 1880.

¹⁰¹Cape Mounted Rifles: This semi-military unit evolved from the Frontier Armed and Mounted Police established in 1878. Capable of rapid movement, its members were responsible for their own horses and supplies. They gained honor in the Morosi campaign and Basuto Rebellion. Hereafter referred to as CMR, Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, p. 88. In Basutoland, Magistrate Arthur Barkly, son of Governor Sir Henry Barkly, thought the CMR a fine corps, composed mostly of sons of gentlemen, Fanny Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos (London:

loyal Basutos must have the right to occupy the territory,¹⁰² and he forced temporary suspension of Cape colonization plans after disallowing the confiscation.¹⁰³

Another issue ultimately overshadowed the land controversy. Frere contended that the Morosi rebellion convinced Cape Colony that it could no longer delay in extending to Basutoland the disarmament act in force among other tribes, an act needed to protect the colony against native disturbances.¹⁰⁴

The Basutos, in conclusion, missed an opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty by earnestly fighting Morosi; by showing untrustworthiness, the tribe became suspect and liable to more rigid control. The British should have aided against the Baphutis to show solidarity with Cape Colony. Kimberley mistakenly still believed Basutoland a native reserve and shamelessly compromised the colony in Basuto eyes. As an example to the Basutos of punishment for rebellion, Cape Town should have received permission to profitably colonize Quthing immediately, as was the usual procedure. European settlers might have felt isolated in primitive Quthing, but they had every right to settle there.

Remington & Co., Ltd., 1883), p. 237. G. Tylden otherwise contends that in 1878 a new commando law sanctioned the enlistment of untrained men in a unit for only particular wars. The title given the established force was the Cape Mounted Rifles, a revival of the name of a disbanded Imperial unit. The troop was understrength, and its artillery needed new equipment and training. Three regiments of the Cape Mounted Yeomanry (hereafter referred to as CMY), a local militia, also formed. It was expensive and impractical to call up more than half the yeomanry at once for service outside its recruiting territory. The volunteers, mostly infantry, were awkward recruits, and the entire force carried outdated Snider carbines. There was provision for the CMY to impress natives as levies, Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 129-30.

¹⁰² Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 252 (1880), 1619, Mr. Grant Duff speaking, June 10, 1880.

¹⁰³ Theal, South Africa, XI, 57-58.

¹⁰⁴ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 600, ltr. Frere to Hicks-Beach, March 2, 1880.

CHAPTER II

PRELUDE TO CRISIS

THE SPRIGG VISIT TO BASUTOLAND AND THE PROCLAMATION OF THE PEACE PRESERVATION ACT

Prime Minister Sprigg in October, 1879, made his annual visit to Basutoland, this time to discuss with the natives the application to the tribe of the provisions of the Peace Preservation Act of 1876,¹ of which the Basutos had received warning in 1868. Evidently, Governor Frere felt the importance of the Sprigg visit, because he gave it publicity in Cape Colony.² Sir Gordon attended two pitsos and was stunned to see an assembled cavalry legion of approximately 7,000-8,000 trained men. He thought it deplorable that Basutoland could muster such a large unit of cavalry.³ Sprigg obviously weathered a disparaging reception at Maseru.⁴ Ignorant of the native language and customs, he did not notice that many of the chiefs and throng did not show good will towards or agreement with him but spoke derisively in their native language. Magistrate Arthur Barkly, on intimate terms with the tribe, contended that the Basutos were restless because of the battle of Isandhlwana and would not disarm.⁵

Sir Gordon, following his agenda, summarily thanked the tribe for assis-

¹Peace Preservation Act (frequently referred to in the following text as PPA): Cape Colony enacted this measure to remove guns from native tribes. A reproduction of the entire proclamation is in B.S.P., (1880), LI, 577-80.

²Ibid., 571, ltr. Frere to Hicks-Beach, March 15, 1880; Ibid., 358, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, n.d., r. August 5, 1879.

³Martineau, Frere, II, 381.

⁴Maseru: A town in western Basutoland which is the administrative capital of the country.

⁵Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, pp. 112-13, 116.

tence against Morosi and in the same manner announced the PPA and the doubling of the hut tax to provide for Basuto education, roads, bridges, and enough police protection to end cattle thefts in and adjacent to Basutoland. These provisions did not invoke a violent reaction at the time, but junior chiefs did seize the opportunity to voice their accumulated grievances loudly in order to keep silent older chiefs. Letsie, nevertheless, asked Sir Gordon who the tribe had offended to deserve disarmament. Sprigg, in his confusion, assumed that the Basutos had assented to his proposals, and he thanked them. The second day, he met with numerous chiefs and councilors; these, however, made apparent their opposition to the PPA. Chief Tsekelo argued that Frere and his ministers purposely wanted to break faith with the Basutos. The major chiefs, Letsie, Masupha, and Molappo, who did not attend, allegedly because of illness⁶, were conspicuous by their absence. The Prime Minister thought it sufficient to mention that the Queen and British Government and people approved of the PPA. He also indicated that the Cape Government would trust Basuto loyalty in the future as in the past and that Cape Colony did not believe the tribe so sentimentally attached to its arms that it would not surrender them.

⁶Sir Godfrey Lagden, The Basutos, II (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1910), pp. 493-97; S.A.D.N.B., pp. 206-07: Born in England, Sir Godfrey Yeatman Lagden came to South Africa in 1878 to serve as chief clerk to the Secretary of State for the Transvaal. During the Majuba campaign, he withstood a siege at Pretoria. After working for the Colonial Office in Sierra Leone and in the Gold Coast, Lagden in 1884 secured a post in Basutoland and became Chief Magistrate in 1890 and again from 1893-1901. As chairman of the Inter-Colonial South African Native Affairs Commission in 1902-04, he authored a noteworthy paper on native problems. Lagden distinguished himself in the Second Anglo-Boer War and thereafter wrote a standard text on the Basuto tribe in 1909; Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 248; Molteno, Molteno, II, 425.

⁷S.A.D.N.B., p. 227. Adolphe Mabille: After joining the Paris Evangelical Mission in 1856, Mabille married a daughter of Eugene Casalis and came to Basutoland in 1860. He worked as a missionary there and in the Transvaal, and he held great political influence among the Bantu.

After the pitso, the reverend Mr. Adolphe Mabilie,⁷ a French missionary, added to the confusion by exposing alleged Government misconduct. He complained that the Prime Minister deleted from the official report comments that the Government would not forcibly disarm the Basutos but would await surrender of guns at native discretion and contended that Sprigg intentionally omitted the last statement as a pretext to use force against Basutoland to end its status as a native territory. Besides these allegations, the pastor recalled only two pitsos to which the Basutos had come armed; usually they had instructions from chiefs to leave weapons behind.⁸

Colonial Undersecretary for Native Affairs Bright, in answer to the Mabilie accusations, reported that the pitso instructions had been printed in Sesuto in a pamphlet and distributed to the tribe in order to prevent misconception and to announce that the Government would wait for calmer times to act on disarmament. The Government, convinced that Basutos would see that the PPA was to their own advantage, therefore stood firm on its policy and instructed the magistrates to eventually disarm the natives.⁹

Concerning opinion on the Sprigg journey, C. W. De Kiewiet alleges that the protesting Basutos had the better platform and that the Prime Minister, had he consulted with Basuto magistrates, would have disavowed speedy disarmament.¹⁰ Edgar Brookes, an authority on South African native policy, terms Sprigg tactless.¹¹

⁸ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 246-48.

⁹ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 563, ltr. Bright, February 26, 1880.

¹⁰ De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p. 266.

¹¹ Brookes, History of Native Policy, p. 103.

In final appraisal, the increased hut tax would obviously benefit the tribe. Prime Minister Sprigg sincerely wanted to discuss this and other issues with the natives and did not want to employ force. Mr. Mabile misrepres-
sented the pitsos and status of Basutoland. The chiefs probably pretended their illness for personal reasons and knew very well that the PPA was neither an insult nor stemmed from tribal offense. The Basutos produced no valid arguments at the pitsos against disarmament, a decree discussed next in detail.

The Sprigg journey fit into a larger perspective. The climax of Cape Colony policy of direct rule over the Basutos came in an attempt to disarm the tribe under the Peace Preservation Act of 1876.¹² The Basutos were excellent marksmen and much better armed than the Zulus.¹³ Over 20,000 tribesmen owned guns, many of them superior weapons.¹⁴ William Greswell declares that some observers felt that Basuto war spirit had increased over a long period and that guns heavily bolstered native confidence. The tribe had increased its self-respect and had learned European battle tactics, and knowledgeable tribesmen with guns could easily defend cliffs and natural fortresses like Thaba Bosigo.¹⁵ Armed with guns, many Basutos thought that they could push the Europeans into the sea.¹⁶ A. Wylward believes that, had Cape Colony correctly appraised the performance of tribal infantry and cavalry in irregular warfare, the Government might have governed Basutoland more carefully.¹⁷ Guns in the hands of the

¹²Stevens, Lesotho, etc., p. 27.

¹³Kathleen Shervinton, The Shervintons: Soldiers of Fortune (London: T. Fisher Unwin, 1899), p. 59. Hereafter cited as Shervinton, The Shervintons.

¹⁴Theal, South Africa, XI, 55.

¹⁵William Greswell, Our South African Empire, II (London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd., 1885), p. 78.

¹⁶Walker, ed., South Africa, p. 490.

¹⁷Aylward, "Basuto," pp. 330, 339.

strong and self-conscious Basutos was an incentive to war and rebellion. To rule this large tribe rampant with quarrels, Cape Colony wanted positive guarantees for peace. Disarmament was part of a process to extend Cape Colony control over all native tribes up to the Natal border. One irate colonist complained that, although the previous Cape administration had illegally allowed unlimited sales of guns to the natives while the Transvaal and Orange Free State objected, loyal natives like the Fingos¹⁸ had been disarmed and even Europeans in the colony held gun licenses. De Kiewiet indicates that Basuto magistrates denied that arms made the natives rebellious and that the colony used the PPA in 1880 to force war on the Basutos,¹⁹ but the original dispatch of the Natal Mercury relates that the tribe would not have had to disarm had its loyalty been unquestionable. Griffith added that guns were toys to these natives and that this incisive proclamation might eradicate polygamy, native mischief, and heathenism. Disarmament was a prerequisite for Europeanization of traditional Basuto customs.²⁰ Brookes, nevertheless, relates that the timing of disarmament was poor because of the effect of Isandhlwana and because of the slow spread of news regarding the British victory over the Zulus at Ulundi. The Zulu War had created the impression that whites feared blacks.²¹

Governor Frere, giving additional reasons for disarmament, asserted that it was impossible for a colonial ministry to uphold law and order when whole

¹⁸Fingos: A native tribe in the Eastern Province of Cape Colony, these nomads united as a result of Zulu aggressions by Chief Chaka. Older tribes regarded them with disdain, Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, p. 167.

¹⁹De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, pp. 263, 266; The Times (London), September 24, 1880, p. 4.

²⁰The Times (London), January 1, 1879, p. 5.

²¹Brookes, History of Native Policy, p. 103.

tribes secreted arms. Basutos were fully-armed and obedient to a few young chiefs and their own dignity.²² As the last three years had shown how firearms aided native fighting power, he deprecated people who fictionalized arguments to prove that the Government should not worry about tribes purchasing guns and that natives would not learn their use and posed a more dangerous threat with assegais.²³ The Basutos, in reality, since early in the century had increased and organized their cavalry and marksmanship. In a few days they could muster thousands of men and avalanche from the mountains towards European settlements. The Basutos, felt Sir Bartle, had no valid excuse for hoarding guns and posing a military threat to Cape Colony and merely wanted to cast off colonial domination. Basutos from Natal had joined Natal native units against the Zulus and had fought bravely, but the behavior of a few, felt the governor, did not vouch for the loyalty of the entire tribe.²⁴ Frere maintained that the Basutos were loyal to the Crown in an abstract fashion but that they mistrusted or ignored colonial commands, an aversion which time and experience hopefully would alter. The tribe believed itself disarmed as a punishment and that the colony deemed all guns evil, but Frere thought that Chief Letsie realized the true reason for disarmament.²⁵ Sir Bartle did not delay disarmament, because he did not trust the tribe. Other Cape officials did not agree on Basuto constancy.²⁶

²² B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 204-05, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, July 26, 1880.

²³ Assegai: A South African native spear which takes its name from a Latin origin. The older type is a throwing assegai, the newer model is a stabbing spear having a broad and sharp blade on a short handle, Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, pp. 24-25.

²⁴ Frere, "The Basutos : . . Cape of Good Hope," pp. 188, 182.

²⁵ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 557-58, ltr. Frere to Hicks-Beach, March 2, 1880.

²⁶ Ibid., 597, ltr. Ayliffe to Sprigg, April 12, 1880.

London could have compelled Frere to dispatch a special commission to investigate Basuto feelings on the PPA, but Wolseley refused to permit the use of British officers. Thus, Frere had to accept reports of Basutoland officials.²⁷

The governor, furthermore, was convinced of the virtuous intentions of the Cape Government and of the necessity of the PPA. The British Government approved the PPA, and Prime Minister Sprigg merely effected a practical theory used before and approved by his predecessors. People qualified to judge, including those who sought native advancement, supported the Government.²⁸ On December 22, 1879, Colonel Griffith ordered the tribe to disarm and receive compensation within a month following. Only a few natives obliged.²⁹ The Chief Magistrate said that a PPA circular carrying the order to the chiefs was not very successful but that natives from different areas brought in guns.³⁰ Frere therefore thought the PPA a success thus far. The tribesmen claimed a sentimental attachment to their arms; thus, Cape Colony had to act like a parent taking a knife from a child. Frere thought that the measure would civilize the Basutos. If disarmament was as difficult as some said, its attainment was more urgent. The failure of the magistrates and missionaries to explain the PPA properly offered no excuse for resistance. Troops would mobilize if colonial ministers saw a risk of rebellion and would crush chiefs who disobeyed, though the governor expected no turmoil unless the natives followed a troublemaker. If PPA adversaries voided the act, African civilization would suffer

²⁷ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 163, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, May 30, 1880.

²⁸ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 591, ltr. Frere to Hicks-Beach, n.d., r. April 15, 1880.

²⁹ Theal, South Africa, XI, 58-59.

³⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 258, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, January 28, 1880.

a setback.³¹

The Cape Government, on April 6, 1880, thereupon proclaimed the provisions of the PPA in Basutoland. Natives could voluntarily surrender arms for compensation up to the extended deadline of May 21, 1880.³² A permit for a weapon would be issued only after a magistrate submitted a name to the Chief Magistrate and to the colonial Secretary for Native Affairs along with the reasons for recommendation.³³ A warranted officer could ask to see a permit, and if a person could not or refused to show it, his arrest would immediately follow. Officials could carry arms; others had to deposit their weapons at the office of their district magistrate. The PPA covered guns, pistols, swords, bayonets, daggers, pikes, spears, and all kinds of ammunition. A competent appraiser appointed by the Chief Magistrate would value within one month all arms given to the magistrates and compensate natives proving ownership.³⁴ Undersecretary Bright added that a board of valuers comprising the magistrate, a headman, and a trader supervised each district.³⁵ Compensation for surrendered guns equalled the appraised value, though most Basutos had bought guns with the sanction of British magistrates at more than the market price.³⁶

One magistrate, however, offered beneficial but mostly ignored amendments.

³¹ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 588-91, ltr. Frere to Hicks-Beach, n.d., r. April 15, 1880.

³² B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 157, ltr. Frere to Hicks-Beach, April 6, 1880.

³³ Ibid., 162, ltr. Sprigg, April 9, 1880.

³⁴ Ibid., 157-59, Proclamation by Frere.

³⁵ Ibid., 236, ltr. Bright to Griffith, March 4, 1880.

³⁶ Theal, South Africa, XI, 56.

He believed that it was unnecessary to confiscate assegais and that a diplomatic endeavor might enable superior chiefs to retain guns for hunting. Traders and other whites also needed to keep guns for self-defense.³⁷

The colonial Government, in any event, acted cautiously. Frere decided that a magistrate could humor chiefs by licensing their guns for sporting purposes. He noted the short time allowed for translation and distribution of the PPA and realized that officials searching for arms without a warrant might cause resistance.³⁸ Searches and seizures therefore were authorized only if the public peace became endangered.³⁹ Sprigg said that an officer could seize a gun without a warrant only if it was inconvenient to travel far for a warrant and only if a wrongdoer could hide guns before the officer returned. Sir Gordon expected less danger of friction with the PPA in Basutoland than elsewhere, because the few whites residing there did not seem to present a threat to the tribe.⁴⁰

The governor, nevertheless, felt that great danger would arise from postponement of disarmament and felt obliged to enforce disarmament immediately or perpetuate what frontier colonists thought a continual source of danger to public peace and governmental authority. The rebellion of Morosi had showed the risk of allowing such a menace to remain. To defenders of native rights in the Government who opposed him, Sir Bartle answered that delay would offer inspiration to Basuto lackeys, including missionaries and professedly loyal tribesmen. These people believed that opposition to the PPA was small, sup-

³⁷ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 256, ltr. Charles H. Bell to Griffith, March 14, 1880.

³⁸ Ibid., 160, ltr. Frere to Ministers.

³⁹ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 557, ltr. Frere to Hicks-Beach, March 2, 1880.

⁴⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 161, ltr. Sprigg, April 9, 1880.

ported by groundless fears of the natives, and that unenforced disarmament would reassure ignorant natives and allow easy implementation of the PPA.⁴¹

Frere further noted that arms always had increased the native threat. As South African natives first bought guns, Cape Government policy deemed that frontier tribes should not have access to arms or ammunition. During wars, the Cape Government enforced strict gun-control regulations, but in peacetime the control was less stringent. In 1870, it became the common practice of public officials to pay natives with guns. Some traders liked this practice, and missionaries argued that natives armed with guns would quickly decimate the game, with the result that the tribes would become more settled and industrious. Before Frere's arrival in South Africa, a commission on border defense noted the increasing danger from guns in the hands of frontier tribesmen. Experienced frontiersmen advised Frere to disarm natives and halt the sale of guns. Sir Bartle contended that the guns in a tribe did not diminish the importance of the assegai, the native weapon most commonly used. It was a lethal weapon, and most natives needed little practice in its employment. Others, he continued, erroneously thought a native ignorant of the use of guns less dangerous than if trained in the use of the assegai. Guns were to natives what artillery was to Europeans. Guns increased martial pride and conceit, causing insubordination and a feeling of invincibility. Frere felt that it was impossible to know which natives, until they were informed of disarmament, were friends or enemies of the Government. During his service in India, rebellion had not spread to districts where guns were inaccessible. Frere did not, however, seem to fear a union of tribes uniting against Cape Colony.⁴²

⁴¹Frere, "The Basutos . . . Cape of Good Hope," pp. 181-82, 190, 193.

In regard to unwarranted hindrance and imputation, portions of the press and some missionaries encouraged native resistance. British interference with his ministers, said Frere, would tend to lessen their constitutional responsibility.⁴³ Edwin Smith, apologist for the obnoxious French missionaries, mistakenly remarks that Sprigg confirmed Basuto suspicions by distinguishing between blacks and whites in application of disarmament.⁴⁴ Godfrey Lagden, a later Basutoland Chief Magistrate, insists that Sprigg, formally pledged to apply the PPA to Basutoland, had excellent reasons to withdraw the act and that the governor announced that it was impossible to withdraw this erroneous application of the PPA. Lagden alleges that most Basuto magistrates, missionaries, traders, and other native officials detested the PPA, which he believed caused the tribesmen to distrust the Cape Government.⁴⁵

Sir Garnet Wolseley was the most outspoken critic in South Africa against the PPA. Sir George Grey, a former High Commissioner of South Africa, said that few persons there differed from Wolseley regarding the view⁴⁶ that indiscriminate ownership of guns by natives was dangerous. Basutos, pointed out Wolseley, had aided Cape Colony in the Zulu War, and he felt that it was asinine to reward such loyalty by disarmament. To disarm natives indiscriminately would incur international censure. It was impolitic to disarm the Basutos

⁴² B.S.P., (1880), LI, 567-70, ltr. Frere to Hicks-Beach, March 15, 1880; Theal, South Africa, XI, 55-56.

⁴³ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 571-72, ltr. Frere to Hicks-Beach, March 15, 1880.

⁴⁴ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 255.

⁴⁵ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 500, 502, 492.

⁴⁶ Earl Grey, "South Africa," The Nineteenth Century, VIII (Dec., 1879-July, 1880), 935.

and not neighboring tribes; disarmed Basutos would never again help Cape Colony. In addition, he indicated that enforcement of the PPA would require a large military force, and Cape Colony did not have the military capability to handle a Basuto rebellion.⁴⁷ To start a war to confiscate guns from loyal Basutos, while leaving hundreds of thousands among neighboring tribes, was too serious a risk. Though Wolseley admitted that he may have overestimated the future Basuto reaction,⁴⁸ his unexpected rebuke caused embarrassment and reinforced Opposition arguments in the Cape Parliament.

Frere, in defense of his management of the PPA, failed to find in Wolseley's contentions anything that warranted a change in the position of the Government. Wolseley, in Frere's view, might have warned Cape Colony earlier of the supposed danger of mass native uprisings or suggested a remedy against indiscriminate Basuto ownership of guns. Whereas colonial boundaries expanded, the London Government constricted the area protected by British troops; therefore, the PPA substituted for them as a guarantee of the peace. While several large districts of Kaffraria had successfully undergone disarmament, government and military officers in England, India, and elsewhere had agreed with the Frere method of disarmament. Three of Frere's ministers, plus Sprigg and several local advisers with experience in frontier warfare, supported his views.⁴⁹

Cape Colony newspapers, moreover, reflected two viewpoints. The Cape Times espoused the Sprigg ministry cause,⁵⁰ while the Cape Argus, the Opposition

⁴⁷ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 586-87, ltr. Wolseley to Hicks-Beach, March 10, 1880.

⁴⁸ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 257 (1881), 1071, Mr. Fowler speaking, January 20, 1881.

⁴⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 202-05, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, July 26, 1880.

⁵⁰ The Times (London), September 6, 1880, p. 6.

tabloid, condemned the PPA application to Basutoland.⁵¹

Sir Michael Hicks-Beach,⁵² predecessor to Kimberley as Colonial Secretary, subsequently carefully delineated British jurisdiction in the PPA by recalling that the British Parliament more than a year before had sanctioned the PPA and would create trouble by its interference.⁵³ The secretary did not interfere with the colonial ministers, who must have realized that Imperial troops could not support them.⁵⁴ Hicks-Beach in May, 1880, advised caution, as the Basutos were loyal subjects, and he felt relieved that no one contemplated searching for arms domestically. Sir Michael realized that the colonial ministers were more intimate with the situation than himself and reminded the colony that it was under responsible government and that he himself could offer only advice.⁵⁵

The Earl of Kimberley, in contrast, suddenly altered his reaction to the PPA. He had said in February, 1880, that, while he supported a gradual and cautious disarmament throughout South Africa, he feared that the PPA would cause disaffection among Basutos.⁵⁶ After Kimberley succeeded to the Colonial

⁵¹Ibid., April 23, 1880, p. 5. Greswell fails to see how the Basutos could constitutionally oppose the PPA, argues that guns in Basuto hands were dangerous as there was no game nearby, and asserts that gun licenses might have been introduced more gradually, Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 86, 82. Natal officials and colonists in vain protested against the application of the PPA, Pall Mall Gazette (London), July 23, 1880, p. 4. There was also much opposition in radical English cliques to the disarmament, Walker, ed., South Africa, p. 490.

⁵²Sir Michael Hicks-Beach: Born in London in 1837, Hicks-Beach entered Parliament in 1864. In 1878, he became Secretary of State for the Colonies. During his tenure, he interviewed Boer delegates protesting the annexation of the Transvaal and by his policy caused the First Anglo-Boer War, Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, p. 226.

⁵³Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 251 (1880), 1205-06, Mr. Justin M'Carthy and Sir Michael Hicks-Beach speaking, March 18, 1880.

⁵⁴B.S.P., (1880), LI, 556, ltr. Hicks-Beach to Frere, March 10, 1880.

⁵⁵Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 252 (1880), 645, Mr. Grant Duff speaking, May 28, 1880.

Office in the spring of 1880, he offered an official viewpoint similar to Hicks-Beach. Queen Victoria, he wrote, had decided that the PPA would not humiliate the Basutos or degrade them in sight of their neighbors and that civilization had reached the point where Basuto habits had to conform with those of other subject peoples.⁵⁷ Kimberley saw no point in discussing the PPA, since the colonial ministers favored the measure, which was already in force. He thought that these ministers probably understood the situation better than the Home Government and cautioned that the colony would have to handle subsequent contingencies without Imperial troops.⁵⁸

Kimberley, despite his turnabout, gave moral support to the Basutos who refused to disarm.⁵⁹ The secretary, disquieted, and aware of Wolseley objections to the PPA,⁶⁰ himself disagreed on the manner of implementation of the act.⁶¹ The earl showed his sympathy for the rebellious element by repudiating British responsibility for disarmament.⁶² The London Government had incurred serious burdens in recent native wars and, necessarily, felt that it must take a position on native relations which would assure peace in South Africa.⁶³ Kimberley warned Cape Colony that the recent lengthy and bloody conflicts between

⁵⁶ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 250 (1880), 258-59, The Earl of Kimberley speaking, February 9, 1880.

⁵⁷ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 596, ltr. Kimberley to Frere, May 13, 1880.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 596-97, ltr. Kimberley to Frere, May 13, 1880.

⁵⁹ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 503.

⁶⁰ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 602, ltr. Kimberley to officer in charge of the Government of the Transvaal, May 26, 1880.

⁶¹ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 259 (1881), 1793, The Earl of Kimberley speaking, March 24, 1881.

⁶² Walker, ed., South Africa, p. 490.

⁶³ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 601, ltr. Kimberley to Frere, May 20, 1880.

natives and British troops in South Africa made it wise to avoid provocations that might lead to new fighting. He promised, however, not to interfere in the PPA issue, as such action would make responsible government at Cape Colony look ridiculous.⁶⁴

In conclusion, it seemed certain that guns reinforced rebelliousness and insolence in the Basutos and that the tribe offered a clear and present military threat; therefore, the PPA was a test of loyalty. The Basutos had no sentimental attachment for their guns, and they disguised their disloyalty with pretended confusion and wanted a special exemption from the PPA.

Cape Colony, furthermore, would have risked danger and contempt from natives by delaying the PPA, though the colony originally might have lengthened the time for disarmament to allow adequate time for explanation to the natives. The Government might have reimbursed natives for the purchase price of a gun, and Basutos might have been allowed to retain the assegai, an integral part of their culture. It was a sound idea to allow chiefs, who could help disarm the tribe, to keep guns. The colony took measures to avoid violent confrontation but did not prepare to meet resistance that was better to have been faced immediately than later with self-reliant colonial military forces which had proved themselves capable in the past. Frere councilors had first-hand knowledge of the capabilities of natives armed with guns; he and Sprigg never regretted the PPA, though the former was overconfident. As the Home Government questioned the PPA, British officers might have helped investigate conditions for disarmament.

⁶⁴ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 254 (1880), 1108, Mr. Grant Duff speaking, July 22, 1880.

BASUTO OPPOSITION TO DISARMAMENT AND THE RESPONSE OF THE CAPE PARLIAMENT

Cape Colony was in a better position than the Home Government to react to Basuto feelings about the PPA. Chief Letsie sent to the Cape Parliament petitions opposing disarmament, which were presented on May 14, 1880.⁶⁵ The Basutos in their first application expressed sadness at the intimations of their misconduct. The natives professed obedience to Christianity and protective colonial laws and recalled their submission to Government demands at every yearly pitso. They could not understand the reason for their disarmament, because arms by themselves seemed harmless. Neighboring tribes would think Basutos had offended the Government and, because the Queen allegedly lost prestige from the PPA, might fear to seek British protection. The petition promised that tribal guns, which had aided the Queen against Morosi and the Zulus, would never endanger the Crown. The natives sensed disgrace and even ventured that their disarmament resulted because they were black.⁶⁶ They feared virtual slavery under the PPA.⁶⁷ In addition, a subordinate petition protested an alleged confiscation of Quthing⁶⁸ on the grounds that Wodehouse had defined exactly the limits of Basutoland to include the Baphuti lands.⁶⁹

The Grahamstown Journal (Cape Colony) indicated that an educated native leader, Chief Tsekelo, had originated the first petition, which also reflected the sentiments of his royal brothers that their power was being eroded. Tse-

⁶⁵ Theal, South Africa, XI, 58.

⁶⁶ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 559-62, Petition of Basuto chiefs and people to Frere.

⁶⁷ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 166-67, Petition of Letsie . . . House Assembly.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 165, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, June 8, 1880.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 166, Petition of Letsie . . . House Assembly.

kelo and others wanted a national Basuto assembly and accused the Government of failing to provide the Basutos with the means needed to express their complaints and opinions in parliamentary style. The tribe wanted reform without loss of reverence for and obedience to the chiefs.⁷⁰

Governor Frere, in the Government recoilment, believed that the natives seemed more prone to emotion than reason.⁷¹ Griffith had blasted a similar petition he had received in 1879 as

. . . the most impertinent and insolent letter he had ever read, and if he had been in the office when it was brought he would have thrown it back in the faces of the bearers of it, and kicked them out of the office. Those who had written and signed it were . . . rebels, who had insulted the Queen's Government.

Griffith now planned to tighten the lax rule in Basutoland.⁷²

Chief Letsie, in further native reaction, gathered representatives from every part of his country for a delegation to Cape Town. He gave Griffith a list of names and asked advice and recommendations for delegation members.

Though Secretary for Native Affairs Ayliffe consented to the scheme,⁷³ Undersecretary Bright informed Letsie that a delegation could not secure advantages.⁷⁴

The paramount chief then bewailed the alleged deprivation of his right to complain to the Crown and thought that Cape Colony must await a royal judgement of the PPA.⁷⁵ Griffith replied that the petitions would not alter the situation

⁷⁰The Times (London), January 1, 1879, p. 5; Edwin Smith argues that Adolphe Mabilie inspired, if not actually wrote, the Basuto petitions, Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 255.

⁷¹B.S.P., (1880), LI, 557, ltr. Frere to Hicks-Beach, March 2, 1880.

⁷²The Times (London), January 1, 1879, p. 5.

⁷³B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 245, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, April 11, 1880; Ibid., 245, ltr. Letsie to Griffith, April 11, 1880.

⁷⁴Ibid., 237, ltr. Bright to Griffith, March 31, 1880.

⁷⁵Ibid., 248, ltr. Letsie to Griffith, April 11, 1880.

and that the magistrates did not have to await a reply from the Queen or the Cape Government.⁷⁶ The paramount chief then said that the short time given in which to surrender his guns frightened him and that the Basutos were demonstrating good faith by their willingness to send a group to Cape Town instead of fleeing to the mountains. Letsie later told Assistant Magistrate Davies of Thaba Bosigo District that the Government was deliberately, but in vain, attempting to make the Basutos appear rebels. Davies thought that the tribe would send a delegation, even at the risk of losing compensation for withheld guns.⁷⁷

Discourse did take place between the delegation and Cape Government. Seven Basutos led by a Pastor Cochet from the Paris Evangelical Society left for Cape Town on April 29, 1880.⁷⁸ Sprigg met with the deputation⁷⁹ and, while restricting its activities,⁸⁰ granted a one-month extension for the surrender of arms. Cochet, acting as interpreter, thought the delay not only would have a beneficial effect on the disarmament efforts of the chiefs but also would mean that the Cape Parliament would take time to discuss the issue. Frere met with the delegation and held several lengthy conversations with Cochet, who mentioned nothing of alarm.⁸¹

The colony acted magnanimously in the face of the obstinacy in Basutoland. One recalcitrant chief, David Masupha⁸² (*Infra*, illust., p. 227, Pl. XI),

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, 245-46, ltr. Griffith to Letsie, April 16, 1880.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, 250-51, ltr. Davies to Griffith, April 23, 1880.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 263, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, April 30, 1880.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 263, ltr. Sprigg to Griffith, April 30, 1880.

⁸⁰ Smith, *The Mabilles of Basutoland*, p. 260.

⁸¹ *B.S.P.*, (1881), LXVI, 162-63, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, n.d., r. June 24, 1880.

led the dissidents who ordered the tribe to keep its guns until the delegation returned. Griffith carried out his instructions amidst a worsening situation⁸³ and reported that the sons of Chief Letsie had joined Masupha.⁸⁴ Letsie sought another deadline continuance so that the deputation could return and report to the tribe. The Chief Magistrate also thought that the prescribed period was too short to collect the Basuto guns and that another extension of time seemed feasible.⁸⁵ The ministry again extended the date of disarmament, from June 21 to July 12, to enable the Basuto deputation to return and divulge the proceedings.⁸⁶ N'tho, a chief councilor to Letsie, and Cochet were confident that the tribe would obey the PPA if given more time.⁸⁷

Colonel Griffith, in assessment, was angered at the petitions because they bypassed his authority and reeked of cunning. The Basutos had ample channels to voice grievances and realized that tribal petitions and a delegation did not constitute customary protests and that the Queen and British Parliament had only indirect control over the tribe. To allow the delegation to report its activities before a disarmament deadline was prudent, because

⁸²S.A.D.N.B., p. 242. David Masupha: The third son of Moshesh, Masupha was a disobedient heir. When Moshesh died, Letsie could not move to the capital at Thaba Bosigo, because Masupha had usurped the mountain. Involved in numerous quarrels with neighboring clans, Masupha defied the colonial Government continuously. The Times printed that Masupha had once tortured a horse thief by squeezing the man's head between two poles. The chief, after agreeing to a cease-fire in the War of 1865, had massacred a force of Bastards and had carried off their women, The Times (London), October 28, 1880, p. 4.

⁸³B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 167-68, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, June 29, 1880.

⁸⁴Ibid., 168, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, June 25, 1880.

⁸⁵Ibid., 168, Cape Times reporting on Sprigg speaking in the June 18, 1880, House Assembly session.

⁸⁶Theal, South Africa, XI, 59.

⁸⁷B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 186, ltr. Frere to Ministers.

the tribe would listen to its own members.

The Cape Parliament, aside from Basuto protests, heatedly debated the already operative PPA application in the spring and summer of 1880. The discussion was the longest in Cape parliamentary history, with 45 of the 67 Assembly members participating. The Prime Minister, believes Edwin Smith, purposely wanted to observe the PPA in Basutoland before Parliament convened. Sprigg announced in the House Assembly that he had never believed the Basutos willing to surrender their arms, because the tribe for years had prepared to rebel by purchasing the best guns and ammunition.

Both the negrophiles led by Saul Solomon and the Afrikaner faction led by Jan Hofmeyr, as expected, carried on vigorous opposition in the House Assembly to the PPA.⁸⁸ Solomon alleged that Letsie had exceeded his authority by disarming before the delegation returned and that Masupha had acted constitutionally according to tribal law.⁸⁹ Opposition observers thought Sir Gordon had urged Frere to proclaim the PPA before Parliament met, because that body reluctantly would veto a law already effected. The people then would have to suffer the consequences of a policy which they did not originate or sanction.⁹⁰ The majority of the Assembly, declared Thomas Fuller, believed that this unwarranted PPA application was dictatorial and unconstitutional, because no emergency had arisen. The Government had spent a large amount of funds unauthorized by Parliament and had assumed a policy which required great consideration by the legislature.⁹¹

⁸⁸Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 245-46, 257, 260.

⁸⁹B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 180, Cape Argus reporting the June 30, 1880, House Assembly session.

⁹⁰The Times (London), May 17, 1880, p. 10.

Cecil Rhodes, on April 19, in his first speech in the Cape Parliament, condemned the PPA but nevertheless supported the Prime Minister. He argued that the PPA was unjust and that its enactment would cause war, because Basuto laborers at the diamond fields planned to forcibly resist the act. The member compared the situation to the Sepoy Mutiny, in which greased cartridges immediately caused the outbreak.⁹² The loyal Basutos, asserted Rhodes, were purposefully out of turn⁹³ disarmed of guns valued as modern status symbols. He warned of wasting millions in toying with serious native problems and objected to subjection of natives to the vacillation of successive Cape Governments.⁹⁴ The member drew praise from the Assembly by criticizing the Sprigg policy of not warning in advance the natives of new laws such as the PPA.⁹⁵ There seemed little in the PPA concerned with the Basuto right to defend themselves against the Orange Free State. Officials, said Rhodes, would realize soon that better-armed natives injured each other less while they defended themselves better against Boer and Portuguese marauders. He praised the Sprigg Government, however, for its work in preventing guns from reaching natives.⁹⁶ Despite other members charging the Prime Minister with slavish humiliation to the Basutos, Rhodes supported the Sprigg gestures if they meant to preserve peace. The

⁹¹Theal, South Africa, XI, 59.

⁹²Vindex, Cecil Rhodes, His Political Life and Speeches, 1881-1900 (London: Chapman & Hall, Ltd., 1900), pp. 31-33. Hereafter cited as Vindex, Cecil Rhodes; J. E. S. Green, Rhodes Goes North (London: G. Bell & Sons, Ltd., 1936), p. 11.

⁹³Sir Thomas E. Fuller, Cecil J. Rhodes (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1910), p. 17. Hereafter cited as Fuller, Rhodes.

⁹⁴Millin, Rhodes, pp. 47-48, 221.

⁹⁵J. G. McDonald, Rhodes (New York: Robert M. McBride & Co., 1928), p. 58.

⁹⁶Green, Rhodes Goes North, pp. 108-09.

tribe, by rejecting such accommodation, would show its desire to fight.⁹⁷

Stuart Cloete believes that Rhodes was motivated to gamble the labor supply in his diamond fields against the certainty of war. Rhodes then would magnify the danger from natives armed with guns and later would start a conflict in which he could escape blame for massacring spear-carrying natives with well-armed troops. He would be able afterwards to consolidate the territory north of the Limpopo River for himself.⁹⁸

After three weeks of debate, the Cape Parliament, by a 37-28 vote, approved the application of the PPA to Basutoland,⁹⁹ thus supporting the Prime Minister, who had already hurriedly effected the PPA application as a result of his past experience with natives and because the situation needed immediate attention.

THE FRENCH MISSIONARIES OPPOSE THE DISARMAMENT POLICY

Cecil Rhodes was not alone in facing impugnation of his position. William Greswell reflected in 1885 on the circumstance of the Paris Evangelical Society¹⁰⁰ in its favorite locale, Basutoland. It was difficult for a missionary

⁹⁷Vindex, Cecil Rhodes, pp. 33-35; Millin, Rhodes, p. 221.

⁹⁸Stuart Cloete, Against These Three (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1945), p. 263.

⁹⁹B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 207-08, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, July 14, 1880.

¹⁰⁰Paris Evangelical Society (frequently referred to in the following text as PES): The order entered Basutoland in 1833 at the request of Moshesh, but six years elapsed before the first baptism occurred. Intertribal warfare halted the beginning of a formal church until 1860. In 1866, the victorious Free State expelled the mission from Basutoland for abetting the Basutos, but the British allowed it to return in 1868. By 1871, 1,831 natives had converted, and from the next year the Government cooperated with the mission to

in a foreign land to preach only abstract religious dogma; usually, he advised the native leader nearby, who sought him as a confidential adviser, especially on external affairs. Missionaries who held political power presented a novel and confusing problem. Their guiding principle was self-protection, as their safety depended on their toleration by the natives. Basutos, however, were generally unresponsive to preaching.¹⁰¹

With its influence, the PES in 1879 and 1880 condemned before the Colonial Office the "reckless" disarmament policy being pursued on the frontiers of Cape Colony. The Government, indicated the community, was making no distinction between loyal and hostile tribes, although a previous Basuto Chief Magistrate had said that the PPA would apply to only rebel tribes. One missionary wrote Kimberley that the Basutos since February, 1879, had felt shocked and unhappy at the prospect of disarmament, because guns cost the natives much money.¹⁰² The society alleged that the governor had issued no PPA proclamation for Basutoland, thus making the disarmament illegal.¹⁰³ Now only by terrifying the natives with armed force or allowing them to become demoralized could Cape Colony maintain order. The prestige of the British Government was at stake,¹⁰⁴ and the PES feared its own position compromised by the PPA.¹⁰⁵ The PPA shocked

educate the tribe; thus, the church expanded rapidly, R. K. Orchard, The High Commission Territories of South Africa (London: World Dominion Press, 1951), p. 21.

¹⁰¹ Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 99-100, 94.

¹⁰² B.S.P., (1880), LI, 551, ltr. F. W. Chesson, Secretary of the APS to Colonial Office, April 5, 1879; B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 704, ltr. PES to Kimberley, December 9, 1880.

¹⁰³ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 553, ltr. Chesson to Colonial Office, May 14, 1879.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 554, ltr. Coillard to Colonial Office, March 8, 1880.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., 555-56, ltr. Casalis to Hicks-Beach, February 25, 1880; Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 94.

the native sense of justice and was premature, and compensation for confiscated Basuto guns and assegais arrived slowly. Delays caused the natives to mistrust the Government,¹⁰⁶ but, educated to loyalty, they did not contemplate hostilities. Though the Basutos feared disarmament like other tribes, the PES nevertheless had urged them to disarm before the PPA reached them.¹⁰⁷

The Colonial Office replied that Sir Bartle Frere had taken great care to disarm the Basutos. The society, remarked Secretary Hicks-Beach, misunderstood the policy adopted for the security of both Europeans and blacks in Cape Colony. The PPA was not intended to punish disloyalty and provided for the award of fair compensation.¹⁰⁸

Adolphe Mabile was the most vociferous PES critic of the PPA and defender of French mission activities. He was on his way to France when he read a Sprigg speech extremely hostile to the French mission. Mabile reported that Chief Magistrate Griffith had once praised French care for the religious and secular needs of the Basutos and had hoped that Mabile could explain the PPA to the tribe and advise Letsie. The missionaries, insisted Mabile, alone taught the law to the blacks, who all other Europeans allegedly despised. The pastor told Letsie that, as chief, he possessed definite rights as a British subject and that he could petition or send a delegation to protest the PPA. Mabile did not oppose the PPA but favored a prohibitive gun tax which, he argued, would accomplish disarmament within six to eight years.¹⁰⁹ However, he

¹⁰⁶ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 553, ltr. Chesson to Colonial Office, May 14, 1879.

¹⁰⁷ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 702, 704, ltr. PES to Kimberley, December 9, 1880.

¹⁰⁸ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 552, ltr. Colonial Office to APS, April 17, 1879.

¹⁰⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 169-70, ltr. Mabile to Sprigg, June 22, 1880.

supposedly exhorted the natives not to refuse the PPA or fight the Government, warning that resistance would cause their dispersion. Mabile considered warnings of the PPA to the Basutos as weak and juvenile and asserted that all the magistrates, traders, and missionaries in Basutoland opposed the PPA, despite the intransigence of the Sprigg ministry. Ironically, pagan tribesmen accused Mabile of assisting the PPA, while the Christians defended him. He thought that his society, though blamed for meddling, had a right to express political opinions.¹¹⁰ The rapid application of the PPA before parliamentary consideration of the Basuto petitions alarmed Mabile. The tribe, now calmed in belief that their supplications would receive contemplation,¹¹¹ would become deeply discontented, according to Letsie.¹¹²

The pastor, furthermore, in his tirade against Prime Minister Sprigg, accused Sir Gordon of purposely silencing Cape parliamentary opposition, ignoring Basuto rights, discouraging petitions or a delegation, and instead ruling the tribe tyrannically. The evangelist warned that Sprigg, desiring a Basuto rebellion in order to confiscate native land, alone was responsible for consequent Basuto actions. Liberality to and proper means of redress for the tribe, Mabile said, could have stabilized European influence.¹¹³

Mabile, moreover, raised the constitutional question of the right of Cape Colony to legislate for Basutoland, whose inhabitants, he thought, had not consented to colonial rule or known of it until 1879 when Letsie viewed

¹¹⁰Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 250-51, 245, 254.

¹¹¹B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 261, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, April 4, 1880.

¹¹²Ibid., 223, ltr. Mabile to Frere.

¹¹³Ibid., 170-71, ltr. Mabile to Sprigg, June 22, 1880.

the documents. Smith surprisingly argues that Mr. Herbert, permanent British Undersecretary at the Colonial Office, admitted to Mabilles that Basutoland never was transferred officially or publicly to colonial jurisdiction.¹¹⁴ The Cape Parliament, declared Governor Frere, enacted all the laws for Basutoland, the High Commissioner had no authority there, and Letsie knew that Griffith received instructions from the colonial Secretary for Native Affairs.¹¹⁵

Adolphe Mabilles, in his efforts, received initial succor from his superior but alienated the Cape Government. Sprigg told Griffith that a delay in printing the PPA would hurt the Government efforts. The pastor refused to print the PPA on the mission press as he had all other Government documents relating to Basutoland, yet he contended that Griffith thanked him for past assistance and for valuable service among the Basutos.¹¹⁶ The Chief Magistrate, in reality, fumed at the Mabilles refusal, reproached the PES, and complained to the Government, which inquired if the views of the evangelist reflected the total French community feeling in Basutoland.¹¹⁷ As the Chief Magistrate could not dissuade Mabilles, officials printed the act at Bloemfontein, Orange Free State.¹¹⁸ Sprigg believed that Mabilles had insulted the Government by refusing to translate and print the PPA, allowing the gloating Boers the duties.¹¹⁹ The PES severely offended the colony by printing only Government documents which

¹¹⁴Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 248n, 253; Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 141; Herbert says otherwise in another source, W. David McIntyre, The Imperial Factor in the Tropics, 1865-1875 (London: Macmillan, 1967), pp. 237-38.

¹¹⁵B.S.P., (1880), LI, 558-59, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, March 2, 1880.

¹¹⁶B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 170, ltr. Mabilles to Sprigg, June 22, 1880; Ibid., 260, ltr. Sprigg to Griffith, March 30, 1880.

¹¹⁷Ibid., 244, ltr. Griffith to Mabilles, April 2, 1880.

¹¹⁸Ibid., 242, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, April 5, 1880.

¹¹⁹Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 263.

agreed with the views of the mission; therefore, the Government sent its own press to Basutoland.¹²⁰ L. Duvoisin, the chairman of the PES, confirmed and approved the actions of Mabile and feared that the Basutos might think that Mabile was aiding the "obnoxious and subversive" PPA.¹²¹ A PES conference at Morija,¹²² nonetheless, advised Mabile to leave the country, ostensibly for a vacation, but more likely in order to assure his escape from Government chastisement.¹²³

More general condemnation of the PES followed. Secretary for Native Affairs Ayliffe castigated the society for not supporting the Government. The PES knew that Cape Colony spent funds to administer Basuto laws, to protect and improve native life, and to support missionaries who did not unsettle the natives. The French mission by not instructing natives to obey the law caused danger and much delay in recovery of arms.¹²⁴ Cecil Headlam, a modern historian, alleges that the French mission urged the Basutos to keep their guns,¹²⁵ and, allegedly, these missionaries gave Basutos superior arms so that chiefs would heed the PES.¹²⁶ The mission, said Frere, also opposed colonial administration and did the most to stir British and Basuto public opinion against the PPA.¹²⁷ The society considered its members above the law, and Mabile traveled to

¹²⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 247-48, ltr. Bright to Griffith, May 7, 1880.

¹²¹ Ibid., 247, ltr. L. Duvoisin to Griffith, April 10, 1880.

¹²² Morija: French Protestant missionaries in Basutoland used this town as their headquarters. Founded in 1833, its name derives from the Biblical Moriah, Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, p. 344.

¹²³ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 252, 254-55, 262-64.

¹²⁴ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 598-99, ltr. Ayliffe to Sprigg, April 12, 1880.

¹²⁵ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 249.

¹²⁶ The Times (London), January 8, 1880, p. 8.

¹²⁷ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 590, ltr. Frere to Hicks-Beach, April 15, 1880.

Europe to raise money for Basuto dissidents.¹²⁸

Frere graphically exposed the Cape parliamentary Opposition and the omni-
nouse ignorance of the PES position. He insisted that the vain Basutos depen-
ded too much on the PES, which knew little of colonial laws.¹²⁹ Mr. Cochet was
surprised to find the Basutos not under the personal direction of Queen Victoria
or the High Commissioner, and, according to Frere, he should have consulted
with advisers, not opponents, of the governor.¹³⁰ Others presumed that the Chief
Magistrate ruled the Basutos. Residing in remote missions, the French had
little notion of the effects of political change.¹³¹ The PES also did not rea-
lize the real reasons why the tribe wanted to retain guns.¹³² Espousing the PES
rationale, the Opposition blasted the Government through the press to an ex-
cited colonial populace.¹³³ Sir Bartle observed that, "The amount of sedition
preached by their [Basuto] friends, from Saul Solomon at Sea Point up to the
reverend Frenchmen on the skirts of the Drakensburg is enough to inflame a
much less excitable population." The blame for hostilities, warned the gover-
nor, would lie less with colonial ministers and Basutos than with the instiga-
tors of insurrection. Frere continued that the Government knew best how to
handle natives, who must obey.

Sir Gordon Sprigg likewise understood as Frere. He charged with "infan-
tilism" persons who disagreed with his policy¹³⁴ and added,

¹²⁸ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 140.

¹²⁹ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 557, ltr. Frere to Hicks-Beach, March 2, 1880.

¹³⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 165-66, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, June 8, 1880.

¹³¹ Ibid., 201, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, July 27, 1880.

¹³² Frere, "The Basutos . . . Cape of Good Hope," p. 184.

¹³³ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 201-02, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, July 27, 1880.

¹³⁴ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 249, 254, 252-53, 263.

But there can be little doubt that if it had not been for the sympathy shown to the insurgent party by the Aborigines Protection Society and the British Parliament clique who were working with it, by the Cape Opposition, and lastly, by Lord Kimberley, there would have been no serious resistance to the disarmament, and no Basuto war.¹³⁵

G. Tylden, the "father" of Basuto historians, in defense of the PES, thought it unjustified to think that these missionaries encouraged Basuto resistance.¹³⁶ John X. Merriman argued that the mission could not aid a tyrannized population without incurring censure for spreading sedition.¹³⁷

The PES, in final appraisal, having already aggravated the adaptation to annexation, provoked the Basutos to ignore Cape Colony sovereignty. The society, prone to exaggeration, spread sedition; its entire conduct was unconscionable. The PES acted brazenly in opposing the PPA in order to protect its investment and influence the tribe. Though Cape Colony had assisted the PES in the past, the mission obstructed the law which it urged the natives to disobey. Treasonous society actions induced violence and nurtured rebelliousness; the mission suffered from acute tunnel vision not to see Basutos arming for war. Mabilles misrepresented Europeans, especially officials, in Basutoland, and advised the tribe in the use of tainted legal procedures. Solomon and his cronies in Parliament undermined an essential and ticklish Government effort and together with the PES bolstered Basuto intransigence.

¹³⁵ Martineau, Frere, II, 383.

¹³⁶ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 141.

¹³⁷ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 241.

CHAPTER III

THE THREATENING TEMPEST

THE BRITISH PARLIAMENT DEBATES THE PEACE PRESERVATION ACT

As the crisis deepened, concern over the PPA intensified in and outside Basutoland. French mission arguments found concurrence among members of the British House of Commons as early as February, 1880. Joseph Chamberlain at that time denounced the act¹ and complained that Prime Minister Sprigg prematurely had told Chief Letsie that the Queen and British people desired Basuto disarmament.² R. W. Fowler and Lyulph Stanley asked that London quickly investigate the PPA and said that Frere was too severe in ordering disarmament of the Basutos, because these loyal and satisfied natives were vulnerable to aggression by hostile Free State tribes.³ Griffith, said Sir Wilfrid Lawson months later, believed that the PPA would lead to war and might tend to encourage hostilities by other tribes. Mr. Grant Duff considered the PPA a serious error and believed that Cape Colony was ignoring British warnings and advice. Guns in native hands caused uneasiness, because Natal, he noted, had passed ten laws against native use or possession of guns, and the Orange Free State also maintained severe restrictions. The 500 whites in Basutoland justifiably felt uncomfortable among 128,000 blacks. Loyal Basutos, however, seeing white overlords everywhere armed, would naturally attempt to retain

¹Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 275.

²Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 250 (1880), 1195, Mr. Chamberlain speaking, February 23, 1880.

³Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 252 (1880), 451, 453-54, Mr. Fowler and Mr. Stanley speaking, May 25, 1880.

guns.⁴ The Earl of Belmore indicated that, though the Basutos must disarm just as their loyal neighbors in Natal, the selected time and procedure of the PPA was regrettable.⁵

Mr. Donald Currie, in defense of the PPA, countered that Cape Colony only protected itself by initiating a plan on the frontier which it thought necessary and that the Basutos could not claim an exemption from disarmament. Britain, he continued, must reinforce responsible government at Cape Town and not interfere with the PPA, because a majority in the Cape Parliament supported the measure. Sir George Balfour added that disarmament prevented war and that numerous factors induced the natives to accept the PPA.⁶

Prime Minister William Gladstone, moreover, declared that the PPA application had progressed too far for the Home Government when first in office to consider it. He thought that the act did not forcibly deprive natives of guns but ended the practice of habitually carrying weapons. Similar to the English act of disarmament, the PPA seemed conducive to the peace and prosperity of Basutoland and did not imply tribal disloyalty. Britain, furthermore, had previously urged disarmament in all Cape territory,⁷ and the Liberal Government could not interfere with Home Rule in a colony when Gladstone was about to propose the same rule for Ireland.⁸

Members of the British Parliament opposed to the PPA, in conclusion, did

⁴Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 257 (1881), 1068, 1084-86, Sir Wilfrid Lawson and Mr. Grant Duff speaking, January 20, 1881.

⁵Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 259 (1881), 1790, The Earl of Belmore speaking, January 20, 1881.

⁶Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 257 (1881), 1079-80, 1082-83, Mr. Donald Currie and General Sir George Balfour speaking, January 20, 1881.

⁷Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 252 (1880), 457-58, Mr. Gladstone speaking, May 25, 1880.

⁸Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 275-76.

not understand the true Basuto turbulence, because they had insufficient facts to judge well the circumstances, and they misrepresented colonial officials. Kimberley mistakenly made unofficial personal statements on the PPA at the same time that Prime Minister Gladstone decided that government policy would not interfere with the act.

HEIGHTENED BASUTO RESISTANCE TO DISARMAMENT

Controversy outside Basutoland did not equal the intensified response among the tribe. Adamant in his position and views, Chief Magistrate Griffith encouraged the tribe to employ constitutional means to reverse the PPA but considered it dangerous policy to allow Basutos to abuse these privileges which they did not understand. Government by magistrate would become stagnant if the Basutos did not comply with the PPA because of their appeal to the British Parliament. The Chief Magistrate reported that the bewildered natives suspected the magistrates who enforced disarmament. Paradoxically, the natives resisted disarmament, because they saw no stringent⁹ enforcement of the PPA. Tribesmen, who in the past had fled to magistrates for protection and advice, now supported powerful chiefs who disobeyed the PPA. Colonel Griffith could not protect loyal natives⁹ and angrily said that the policy of moral force, which he unwillingly accepted as the method to govern Basutoland, had dissolved.¹⁰ The Chief Magistrate, nevertheless, obeyed his orders but deplored the strain on the Basutos and the loss of his admirable reputation among the natives ac-

⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 249, ltr. Griffith to Bright, April 27, 1880.

¹⁰ De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p. 267.

quired during thirty-two years in the Queen's service.¹¹

Governor Frere, regarding his interpretation of the progression of the PPA application, replied that it was Griffith who partly caused the negative results of the PPA, because, though the Chief Magistrate protested that the Cape Government gave him no security, actually he influenced the disarmament date and effect. Cape Town promised the irate Griffith a leave of absence after the Basuto crisis had ended. Future plans, indicated Frere, also called for a commission on Basutoland to impress the Cape Parliament by dealing with discontented natives, forfeited land, overcrowding, and by ascertaining what was actually traditional or merely feigned as traditional by the tribe.¹² Sir Bartle ordered the Basuto police not to provoke incidents by seizing guns unless by Government command¹³ and urged the issuance of gun licenses to trusted natives.¹⁴

The discordant Chief Masupha, during colonial alarm, began outright disobedience. Fingo Chief Mpoba had collected all the guns in his village for relinquishment. Masupha dispatched 300-400 men who surprised the hamlet on the morning these Fingos were to surrender their weapons. A son of Masupha led the marauders and bullied a meeting of neighborhood natives into not surrendering their guns until the Cape Government answered the Basuto petitions. Magistrate Charles Harland Bell of Leribe District scolded Masupha for calling an armed meeting of his own clan without authorization; the chief answered disrespectfully and tried to justify the gathering. It was not unlike Masupha

¹¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 229-30, ltr. Griffith to Bright, January 26, 1880.

¹² Ibid., 195-97, ltr. Frere on Griffith dispatches, July 6 and 7, 1880.

¹³ Ibid., 187, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, July 20, 1880.

¹⁴ Ibid., 187, ltr. Frere to Ministers.

to frighten natives and disobey his magistrate while the country was unstable. He thought that by distracting the Government he could regain his waning power. Magistrate Bell asked Griffith to reprimand Masupha,¹⁵ who also had obstructed collection of the hut tax.¹⁶

Colonel Griffith, in further Government reprobation, accused Masupha of misconstruing the role of a chief under the Cape Government; a chief had to obtain permission to hold an armed assembly. Chief Masupha, who had fabricated reasons for refusing disarmament and had intimidated tribesmen, incurred responsibility for future trouble.¹⁷ Undersecretary Bright considered it foolhardy to allow Masupha to carry arms.¹⁸ He accused the chief of fomenting violence and threatened to arrest him if he again dispatched an armed force without authorization, because chiefs inciting rebellion were subject to deposition.¹⁹ Sprigg stopped Government allowances to Masupha in abeyance of improved conduct,²⁰ and Letsie scolded his half-brother and told him to apologize.²¹

Prime Minister Sprigg, acting against Basuto truculence, remarked that the tribe understood the new July deadline for the PPA.²² He thought that Letsie promoted dangerous delay by insistently using every constitutional means to stop the PPA. Sir Gordon informed Letsie that the Cape Parliament had sanctioned the PPA and that the chief was listening to misguiding counsel.²³ Sprigg

¹⁵ Ibid., 231-32, ltr. Bell to Griffith, February 3, 1880.

¹⁶ Theal, South Africa, IX, 65-66.

¹⁷ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 232-33, ltr. Griffith to Masupha, February 10, 1880.

¹⁸ Ibid., 228, ltr. Bright to Griffith, February 26, 1880.

¹⁹ Ibid., 233, ltr. Bright to Griffith, February 24, 1880.

²⁰ Ibid., 259, ltr. Sprigg to Griffith, February 28, 1880.

²¹ Ibid., 234, ltr. Letsie to Griffith, March 1, 1880.

²² Ibid., 161, ltr. Sprigg, April 9, 1880.

announced that his ministry would enforce the PPA, and he gave Griffith the right to ask for primed military forces to support the Government and loyal Basutos against the chiefs.²⁴

Chief Magistrate Charles Brownlee²⁵ in Griqualand East District (Infra, map, p. 230, Pl. XVI), commenting on his convictions and on agitation in other areas, reported that Basuto agents arrived in his district to muster support to resist the PPA. He believed that Masupha advised Letsie,²⁶ who, in April, 1880, had sent two envoys to other tribes, who all gave adherence to the dissident Basuto stand on disarmament. Basuto Chiefs Sofonia and George had disarmed, but most chiefs and the majority of the tribe at least disliked the PPA. Compensation of less than half the value of a gun nurtured native anger. Brownlee thought that the PPA, if enforceable, was the best method to obtain peace; still, Cape Colony until then had disarmed only loyal tribes like the Gaikas, who voluntarily had abandoned their rebel chiefs, and the Fingos.²⁷

Magistrate John Austen, moreover, in still-turbulent Quthing District, reported that all chiefs in his area except the Tembu Chief Tyali had offered

²³ Ibid., 261, ltr. Sprigg to Griffith, March 30, 1880.

²⁴ Ibid., 259, ltr. Sprigg to Griffith, February 8, 1880.

²⁵ Dictionary of South African Biography (1968), I, 126-28. Hereafter cited as D.S.A.B. Charles Brownlee: Brownlee grew up among the Xhosa tribe and held great influence among the Bantu. He became such an authority on Bantu laws and customs that chiefs asked his advice. A commando during the War of the Axe in 1846, Brownlee later served as commissioner to the Gaika tribe and persuaded it to accept European magistrates and to understand the benefits of Cape Colony rule. He served as Secretary for Native Affairs, then as Chief Magistrate of Griqualand East starting in 1878. An insurgency occurred in four Griqua districts in 1880 in conjunction with the Basuto Rebellion, but the Chief Magistrate quickly crushed the rebels.

²⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 263, ltr. Sprigg to Griffith, April 10, 1880.

²⁷ Charles Brownlee, A Chapter on the Basuto War (Lovedale, Cape Colony: South Africa Mission Press, 1889), pp. 4, 6-8. Hereafter cited as Brownlee, Basuto War.

to surrender their guns, but they feared the warlike in the district. While they asked if they might register and retain their guns to protect their livestock, Tyali insisted that he kept guns of Chief Letsie by his order, and he would not surrender the arms without his permission.²⁸ The colonial Secretary for Native Affairs requested Austen to investigate Tyali and to gather evidence to convict the chief of treachery in the Morosi Rebellion.²⁹ Letsie received consent for a pitso on March 12 in order to inform natives in Quthing of his feelings.³⁰ E. Ayliff, acting magistrate at Quthing, had registered and returned guns to loyal natives, because Griffith had warned Austen of danger, but Undersecretary Bright then ordered Ayliff to stop returning guns.³¹ The Home Government did not want natives armed in Quthing, because colonial troops would protect them.³²

To illustrate how well colonial officials informed Letsie and other anxious Basutos to no avail about the PPA, Assistant Magistrate Davies of Thaba Bosigo District gave chiefs and headmen in his area copies of the PPA in Sesuto and held a meeting at the village of Letsie to discuss the act. Basuto tribesmen anxiously attended.³³ The recalcitrant Lerothodi excused himself but sent a delegate, and most other chiefs attended. Magistrate Arthur Barkly, convening the meeting on April 20, 1880, recalled the motives for disarmament

²⁸ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 238, ltr. Austen to Griffith, March 3, 1880.

²⁹ Ibid., 241-42, ltr. Bright to Griffith, April 3, 1880; Chief Tyali had planned to attack in the rear the first colonial forces that crossed the Telle River, then assault the troop camp at Palmietfontein, Ibid., 239, Mofetudi to Austen.

³⁰ Ibid., 259, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, February 28, 1880.

³¹ Ibid., 241, ltr. Bright to Griffith, April 29, 1880.

³² Ibid., 241, ltr. Bright to Griffith, March 31, 1880.

³³ Ibid., 250, ltr. Davies to Griffith, April 23, 1880.

and said that the Queen would not likely interfere in the matter. Barkly read and explained the PPA, for which he offered no hope of alteration or revocation. He did not sway the natives, who accepted volatile suggestions from dissidents and stalled.³⁴

Some magistrates, moreover, offered explanations for native hesitancy about the PPA. Bell considered moral force useless in his circumstances. Several loyal Basutos asked him at Berea village what protection the Government would offer them if their chiefs abused them. Tribesmen would obey the PPA if Cape Colony used more than moral force to protect them. Natives, who rather would risk loss of compensation than risk being "eaten up," henceforth waited for orders from a chief to surrender guns, and several natives asked to retain their guns until Chief Letsie, the only visible authority, acted. Masupha resisted, and some neighboring headmen followed his example.³⁵ Magistrate William Henry Surmon of Cornet Spruit³⁶ District held a native meeting on April 20 to explain the PPA. He acquired the impression that all would follow Letsie, who would wait to act until the delegation returned from Cape Town.³⁷ Chief Letsie thought that all loyal natives would simultaneously disarm with him and that a divided tribe could not function.³⁸ Basutos, believed Barkly, disliked the PPA just as much as their chiefs did, though people would have surrendered guns if the chiefs had not gained back some of their old power over the tribe.

Magistrate Barkly, noting the hesitancy quickening into native turbulence,

³⁴ Ibid., 251-52, ltr. Barkly to Griffith, April 26, 1880.

³⁵ Ibid., 253, ltr. Bell to Griffith, April 29, 1880.

³⁶ Spruit: a small river, dry for periods, then subject to sudden floods.

³⁷ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 254, ltr. Surmon to Griffith, April 30, 1880.

³⁸ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 261.

supported a delay in the PPA. Chief Lerothodi loved warfare and refused to give up his arms. When Barkly called another pitso to investigate strife in the Mafeteng area, Lerothodi led hundreds of charging mounted natives all screaming war cries into Mafeteng town.³⁹ Nearby chiefs insisted that Basuto servants of Barkly quit their jobs.⁴⁰

Regarding the tribal debate over the PPA at the July 3 pitso of Letsie at Thaba Bosigo,⁴¹ Mphoma, reflecting the attitude of the wary, asked Griffith to intercede on behalf of the tribe against the PPA, and Ramatseatsana wanted someone to travel to England to make representation against the act. Lerothodi reiterated that Basutos had not sought to unite with Natal because of the gun laws there and that by tradition Basutos cherished their arms. Khomaleburn suggested the pitso vote on the PPA just as the Cape Parliament, and Mama Letsie voiced anger, because the Basuto delegation had not been allowed to speak in Parliament. Mapeshoane never heard of a tribe becoming prosperous after disarmament, and Letsumi superstitiously contended that guns must embody some odious aura. Masupha argued that natives could desert a chief who acted unjustly and that Sprigg had promised him that Basutos could surrender their arms when they felt ready. Conversely, the Basuto delegation to Cape Town, echoing different sentiments, advised disarming. Chief Jonathan Molappo⁴² sur-

³⁹ Mafeteng: the name of this district headquarters in southwest Basutoland means place of unmarried women, Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, p. 310.

⁴⁰ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, pp. 143-44.

⁴¹ Thaba Bosigo: a great fortified mountain and an object of Basuto pilgrimages, because French-Swiss missionaries had buried Moshesh here, Poultney Bigelow, Pt. V, "The Last of a Great Black Nation," Harper's New Monthly Magazine, Dec. 1896-May, 1897, p. 634.

⁴² S.A.D.N.B., p. 189. Jonathan Molappo: Successor to his father Molappo in 1880, Jonathan aided Natal in 1873 against Langalibalele and helped capture him. He served with Cape Colony against Morosi and in the Basuto Rebellion. Frequently fighting his brother Joel, Jonathan periodically fled to the Orange Free State but was ultimately victorious.

rendered his guns as his father had instructed and followed Letsie, because the latter was the paramount chief, and because peace had brought prosperity. Sofonia Moshesh reminded his fellows that guns had not helped to fight the Boers. Tsekelo Moshesh rebuked the treasonous talk of others and said that the tribe had exhausted every legal means of redress. Letsie told his people to disarm if they still followed him and asked for a document promising the tribe the same quality of life after disarmament. The Queen, replied Griffith, unfortunately had seen bloodshed in other armed tribes, such as the Zulus and Galekas, tribes crushed because they held guns; therefore, he accepted responsibility for future harm done to the disarmed tribe. He, however, noted that the Basutos cleverly concealed their feelings when expressing themselves and that the tribe opposed giving up weapons and did not intend to.⁴³

Lagden, in further contemplation of Basuto behavior, suggests that perhaps the tribesmen honestly could not understand constitutional alterations which superseded promises made in the past. Letsie, however, so perfidiously conducted himself that the Government trusted him while he encouraged resistance to the PPA. His treachery so disoriented the tribe that numerous loyal natives surrendered their guns without his permission.⁴⁴ The confusion of other Basutos turned to anger, and the subsequent demoralization in Basutoland necessitated the use of troops.⁴⁵

Basutoland, said Griffith, also suffered from external threats. Some white agitators against the PPA, one a correspondent for the Cape Argus, slinked

⁴³ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 207-13, ltr. Griffith to Bright, July 14, 1880; cf., Theal, South Africa, XI, 59; Ibid., 186, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, June 29, 1880.

⁴⁴ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 509, 511.

⁴⁵ De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, pp. 266-67.

into Basutoland.⁴⁶ Gunrunners from surrounding areas flocked to the country,⁴⁷ and all gun traders actively opposed the PPA.⁴⁸ Griffith complained that Free State burghers freely sold guns and ammunition to the Basutos and rumored that Cape Colony could not muster an army.⁴⁹ Orange Free State law, replied Johannes Brand, president of that country, forbade selling arms and ammunition to a native without a special order from the president, and he promised to prosecute transgressors of this law.⁵⁰

The Basutos, to be sure, clearly conceived the PPA and realized that Griffith had appealed their case to the limit and that they had lost their appeal. Moral force was worthless in enforcement, as some natives would not voluntarily disarm; thus, dissidents gathered allies. Weak Letsie countenanced rebellion and deceived his own tribe into mistrusting the Government. Lerothodi was on the verge of rebellion, and Masupha ignored fair warning for his misbehavior. One cannot blame Basutos for disbelieving that the Sprigg ministry would protect them after disarmament, because the Cape Government could not assist them during this period. Magistrates rightly suggested that loyal natives retain guns. Colonial troops might have entered the country by July, 1880, at the request of Griffith, to demonstrate to chiefs and tribesmen the will and ability of Cape Colony to enforce the PPA. Frere might have acted more decisively, and a commission to investigate tribal unrest should have inspected Basutoland before the PPA application. Colonial officials did not make known the alarming events soon enough, especially to the British Parliament.

⁴⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 258, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, January 26, 1880.

⁴⁷ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 137.

⁴⁸ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 591, ltr. Frere to Hicks-Beach, April 15, 1880.

⁴⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 221, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, August 7, 1880.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 265, ltr. President Johannes Brand to Frere.

BASUTO MILITIA AND POLICE

The agitation by dissident Basutos called attention to the inadequate protection given loyal natives and colonial officials in Basutoland. The 1877 annexation of the Transvaal to the British Empire had caused the too thin deployment of the already inadequate South African Imperial garrisons.⁵¹ Governor Frere later alleged that London was purposely maintaining only enough soldiers in Cape Colony to defend Cape Town, Simons Bay, and Table Bay. As British troops would not aid in frontier defense, it was more imperative to disarm the Basutos.⁵² Sir George Grey instead regretted that, whenever war began between colonists and natives, it was almost impossible to exclude British troops from the fighting.⁵³

Various notions, therefore, unfolded for an effective Basuto defense force. Prime Minister Gladstone supported the initiation of a Basuto militia,⁵⁴ and Kimberley agreed that a native force would demonstrate colonial trust for the Basutos and colonial protection for native land.⁵⁵ The Earl of Belmore envisioned a Basuto yeomanry to accustom the tribe to regard the ownership of guns as a privilege allowed only to the militia which was raised to defend its environs. The Cape Parliament might sanction the operation, after which this yeomanry might help colonial troops maintain order.⁵⁶ Sprigg, at the 1879 pitso,

⁵¹ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 129.

⁵² Frere, "The Basutos . . . Cape of Good Hope," pp. 185-86, 188.

⁵³ Grey, "South Africa," p. 936.

⁵⁴ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 252 (1880), 458, Mr. Gladstone speaking, May 25, 1880.

⁵⁵ Ibid., 645, Mr. Grant Duff speaking, May 28, 1880.

⁵⁶ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 259 (1881), 1790-91, The Earl of Belmore speaking, March 24, 1881.

had offered his idea for a native militia.⁵⁷ He announced that Basutos could serve the Cape Government in a militia but would have to surrender their own guns.⁵⁸ Frere authorized Griffith to license, arm, and equip a Basuto militia.

The existing Basuto enforcement agency, the police force, exhibited a dismal image, and the governor ordered the number of police increased.⁵⁹ The police numbered 111 men, of which the officers were sons of chiefs, and the magistrate of each district raised one contingent. Magistrate Bell in 1873 had alleged that the police were submissive to the chiefs,⁶⁰ and another official in 1874 had advised against arming Basuto police with breechloaders or Snider rifles from the magistracies, because disloyal chiefs easily could steal these guns.⁶¹ Bell in June, 1880, complained that his police were only partially equipped with guns and ammunition, that some of the guns were damaged, and that his force was not in readiness.⁶² Magistrate Surmon had no Snider ammunition for his police and urgently asked for some.⁶³ Griffith never warned Governor Frere of the inferior condition of the police until Sir Bartle asked the Chief Magistrate to acknowledge arms needs, destinations for police arms shipments, and conditions of police weapons in all Basutoland districts. Frere ordered the police to block interference with Government officials and traders or Basutos who surrendered arms.⁶⁴

⁵⁷ B.S.P., (1880), LI, 565, ltr. Bright, February 26, 1880.

⁵⁸ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 161-62, ltr. Sprigg, April 9, 1880.

⁵⁹ Ibid., 187, ltr. Frere to Ministers.

⁶⁰ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 232.

⁶¹ Theal, South Africa, XI, 54.

⁶² B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 193, ltr. Bell to Griffith, June 12, 1880.

⁶³ Ibid., 194, ltr. Surmon to Griffith, June 24, 1880.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 195-96, ltr. Frere on Griffith dispatches, July 6 and 7, 1880.

A native militia, after all, was complimentary, but militiamen and policemen had to prove their reliability. The tribe then would perceive guns in their proper perspective. Though Griffith previously might have adequately equipped and strengthened the police, it might have been unwilling to enforce the PPA.

CHAPTER IV

THE BASUTO CIVIL WAR

CAUSES OF THE CIVIL WAR AND LATER REBELLION

The causes of the Basuto struggle stemmed from accumulated tribal opposition to European rule and influence and reaction to adverse situations for which the tribe held Europeans responsible. Governor Frere desired to enforce the British land tenure system in Basutoland, thus, lessening the power of hereditary chiefs and, contrary to their wishes, making it possible for individuals to buy and receive title to land. After the suppression of tribal land communism, whites and blacks were to live together with equal rights and opportunities for social and political success.¹ A British law passed in 1880 recognized individual rights of property in Basutoland. Thus, each tribesman owned the property upon which his house and kraal² stood.³

Sir Bartle and others offered additional reasons for the rebelliousness of the Basuto chiefs. While the Cape Government, for the benefit of the entire tribal group, was slowly limiting the power of clan chiefs, Chiefs Masupha, Ramanella, and Joel were, in fact, becoming more unruly under restraints placed on them by the magistrates.⁴ The chiefs for many years had thought that European magistrates and European law undermined them. Chief Sofonia believed that Basutos must obey colonial laws and that, as witchcraft and superstition

¹Frere, "The Basutos . . . Cape of Good Hope," pp. 195-96.

²Kraal: A South African Bantu village with enclosures for livestock, Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, p. 279.

³B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 174, Cape Argus reporting on Mr. Orpen speaking in the June 30, 1880, House Assembly session.

⁴Theal, South Africa, XI, 54.

were obnoxious influences, the chiefs would soon be superfluous.⁵ Masupha led the reactionary party favoring independence and expulsion of whites from Basutoland and supporting the right to raid for cattle,⁶ which was a major source of wealth to Basutos. Before 1868, natives acquired cattle by tribal warfare, cattle raids, and outright looting. The chiefs took all booty, kept some cattle for themselves, and distributed the remainder to the leaders of the raid and others.⁷ These dissident Basutos used European plows and guns but refused to accept British social or political institutions. Discordant chiefs ruled absolutely, confiscated cattle from opponents, and consigned wives and children of their adversaries to slavery in their kraals.⁸ Rebellious Basutos wanted no magistrate or hut tax. The chiefs and their close comrades, declared Magistrate Barkly, always had opposed colonial rule but never had won the people to support them until the disarmament issue.⁹

An internal factor which sharpened hostility to Cape Colony rule was tribal dissension caused by resentment within the ruling family of the tribe. There were three branches in the family of Chief Moshesh (*Infra*, p. 239, Pl. XXV). The first and foremost branch consisted of, among others, Chiefs Letsie, Masupha, Lerothodi, Alexander Letsie, Bereng Letsie, and Mama Letsie. A second part of the family exerted little influence over the tribe. The third branch included Chiefs Jonathan, Joel, Nehemiah, Putsane, Sofonia, George, and Tsekelo. The entire first branch was disaffected from the others, although

⁵ Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 78-79.

⁶ Frere, "The Basutos . . . Cape of Good Hope," p. 180.

⁷ Ashton, The Basuto, p. 172.

⁸ Frere, "The Basutos . . . Cape of Good Hope," p. 195.

⁹ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, p. 148.

Paramount Chief Letsie allied himself ostensibly with the third group, most of whom were Loyalists. His brothers jealously feared that his desertion would establish primacy for the third branch of the family.¹⁰ According to Stevens, several chiefs sought to gain independence from supreme tribal authority by starting a civil war.¹¹

One member of the British House of Commons, speaking in reference to other reasons for anti-European belligerency, supported the theory that the tribe had rebelled because of an unresolved and legitimate grievance. Griffith, he said, warned to no avail that, although complaints included the appropriation of £12,500 in Basuto tax revenues, the attempted confiscation of Quthing, and the doubling of the hut tax, it was the PPA which actually ignited the outbreak. Basuto hostilities, contended another member, resulted from the protective reaction borne out of the fear that the tribe would undergo military conquest as had been the case with the Zulus.¹²

The Cape Colony annexation of Basutoland, in reflection, had invalidated the Napier proclamation concerning tribal land (Supra, p. 5, n. 23), and the Government should have installed to paramountcy the champions of Europeanization in the third branch as soon as the first branch became seditious.

Major reasons for the Basuto Civil War and Rebellion, in summation, included the erosion of chiefly power under the influence of European law, the imposition of magistrates, the forced halt to cattle raiding, the dissident desire for independence and expulsion of all whites, the royal family quarrel,

¹⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 306, Cape Times, August 25, 1880; cf., Vindex, Cecil Rhodes, p. 46.

¹¹ Stevens, Lesotho, etc., p. 27.

¹² Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 257 (1881), 1066-67, Sir Wilfrid Lawson and Mr. Fowler speaking, January 20, 1881; Molteno, Molteno, II, 424.

and the effects of the Zulu campaign. Minor causes were the opposition to the hut tax, land hunger, drought, non-receipt of Quthing, colonial supervision of the Basuto treasury, chiefly opposition to native labor in the diamond fields and in other employment under whites, and incitement from French Protestant missionaries. A too rapid doubling of the hut tax, unfair compensation for guns, and confiscation of cherished assegais constituted the only valid Basuto grievances. Objection to the PPA was, as a whole, merely an excuse and catalyst for disaffection.

THE BASUTO CIVIL WAR, JUNE-SEPTEMBER 1880

In June, 1880, dissident Basuto elements took advantage of grievances to initiate a bitter civil war in their country. Relatives assailed each other, and family and clan quarrels erupted openly and violently. Basutos themselves named the Loyalists Matikete, the chosen people, and the rebels Mabelete, the wild people.¹³ Chief Magistrate Griffith reported that Loyalist chiefs were receiving threats of punishment for supporting the Cape Government,¹⁴ and one loyal headman feared murder by his own clan.¹⁵ Heathens and Christians, declared Assistant Magistrate Davies, intended to attack his residency and murder all who had disarmed. Some Loyalists feared fleeing to Maseru, because they would thereby risk death as informers.¹⁶ Rebels shot at other natives for no apparent

¹³ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 271.

¹⁴ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 169, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, n.d., r. June 25, 1880.

¹⁵ Ibid., 188, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, June 28, 1880.

¹⁶ Ibid., 172, ltr. Davies to Griffith, June 21, 1880.

reason.¹⁷

G. Tylden asserts that, as civil affairs in Berea District deteriorated, the death of Loyalist Chief Molappo strengthened the rebels,¹⁸ as did the fact that, locally, only natives working in Government service and those from the clan of Jonathan surrendered their weapons.¹⁹ Rebel Chief Joel, the second son of Molappo, did not surrender his arms, and some natives under his brother Jonathan who would not disarm joined Masupha.²⁰ As Jonathan and Joel began fighting in Leribe District for paramountcy in their clan, Masupha and Joel easily drove Loyalists out of the area and plundered homes. Most of the refugees fled to Maseru and begged protection from Colonel Griffith, who obliged and fortified the town.²¹

Magistrate Bell, as the magistrates initially responded to this premeditated rebel plotting, told of natives in the Berea and Leribe Districts pleading for the return of their guns to protect themselves from a threatened attack, but he refused the requests pending verification of the intimidation. He promised to return guns to Chief Jonathan upon verification that Masupha intended to kill this Loyalist chief, who considered himself the legitimate successor to his deceased father. Chiefs meanwhile coerced tribesmen to disobey the PPA. Masupha had bought gunpowder, and his sons hoarded guns.²² He grazed

¹⁷ Ibid., 175, Cape Argus reporting on Mr. Orpen speaking in the June 30, 1880, House Assembly session.

¹⁸ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 142.

¹⁹ Theal, South Africa, XI, 60.

²⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 271, ltr. Bell to Griffith, July 10, 1880.

²¹ Theal, South Africa, XI, 60; c.f., Neil Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966 (Cape Town: Books of Africa, Ltd., 1967), p. 27.

²² B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 271, ltr. Bell to Griffith, July 10, 1880; Ibid., 184, ltr. Bell to Griffith, June 25, 1880.

his cavalry horses in preparation for future combat²³ and planned to attack the Berea magistracy and two Loyalist villages. The rebels, seeking to capture the surrendered guns at the magistracy, intended to face colonial troops.²⁴ Chiefs Lerothodi, Moletsane, Putsane, Joel, Khetise, Smith, and Chopo planned to join Masupha.²⁵ Bell finally ordered Loyal Chief Matsela to remain armed temporarily in order to prevent Joel from intimidating others.²⁶ Magistrate Surmon, however, was unable to safeguard Loyalists or to stifle dissidents in his district.²⁷

Magistrate Barkly, in addition, faced the stalwart defiance of Lerothodi, who ordered the murder of tribesmen who gave up their guns, and who commanded the rebels to keep under their supervision guns in Loyalist villages.²⁸ After Magistrate Barkly charged Lerothodi with transgression of the PPA, the chief answered seditiously, boldly challenged the Cape Government to wrest his guns, and ordered his clan to shoot policemen or Government officials who attempted to seize arms. Lerothodi did not want civil war, thought Barkly, but was defying Cape Colony only to postpone the PPA. The magistrate told the Loyalists to rely on Government protection and condemned the menacing intimidation.²⁹

The sole Government official who acted decisively in the initial turmoil was Colonel Griffith. To protect whites and Loyalists until troops arrived, he requested the shipment of Snider carbines and ammunition to Maseru and asked

²³ Ibid., 185, ltr. Lefuyane to Bell, June 25, 1880.

²⁴ Ibid., 185, ltr. Umahasle to Bell, June 26, 1880.

²⁵ Ibid., 185, ltr. Lefuyane to Bell, June 25, 1880.

²⁶ Ibid., 271, ltr. Bell to Griffith, July 10, 1880.

²⁷ Ibid., 191, ltr. Surmon to Griffith, June 24, 1880; Ibid., 191, Mpusi before Surmon, June 24, 1880; Ibid., 191-92, ltr. Surmon to Griffith, June 28, 1880.

²⁸ Ibid., 190, Masinyane before Barkly, June 25, 1880.

²⁹ Ibid., 189, ltr. Barkly to Griffith, June 28, 1880.

permission to muster 200 local whites.³⁰ The Chief Magistrate housed refugees from different parts of Thaba Bosigo District and some recently rearmed Fingos, who had lost cattle to rebels.³¹ Rebels, related Griffith on July 20, were attacking Loyalists in all districts.³²

Active among the rebel faction, meanwhile, some sons of the ineffectual Letsie ambushed a cart full of surrendered guns belonging to their father. After Letsie summoned two of his Loyalist sons to aid him,³³ his rebel offspring promised to kill anyone who attempted to surrender the guns.³⁴ His sons Bereng, Mama, his brother-in-law Ramanella, and numerous other truculent chiefs opposed the PPA. Letsie then said that tribesmen would think him insincere if he gave up his arms³⁵ and, maintaining that he could not find anyone to transport his weapons, only pretended to disarm³⁶ and surrendered only three guns by July 13, one day after the PPA deadline.³⁷ The Chief Magistrate admitted that the authority of Letsie was gone and that the entire country was anarchic.

Energetic Masupha, offering outrageous excuses for his true intentions, planned to silently resist the PPA until either troops supported the magistrates or the police searched for weapons, then, together with his forces, proposed to rebel, plunder trading stores, and kill whites.³⁸ Masupha, remarked natives,

³⁰ Ibid., 183, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, June 29, 1880.

³¹ Ibid., 198-99, Cape Argus reporting on Sprigg speaking in the July 24, 1880, House Assembly session; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 27.

³² B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 197, ltr. Brand to Sprigg, July 20, 1880.

³³ Ibid., 206-07, Motemekoane Nchela before Maitin, July 8, 1880; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 27.

³⁴ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 172, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, June 23, 1880.

³⁵ Theal, South Africa, XI, 60.

³⁶ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, p. 142.

³⁷ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 276, ltr. Davies to Griffith, July 13, 1880.

³⁸ Ibid., 206, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, July 13, 1880.

purposely precipitated war involving the whole country.³⁹ As this time seemed to him the last opportunity to expel the whites, the chief planned to massacre all Christian missionaries and magistrates.⁴⁰ On the PPA deadline date, Magistrate Bell, who had received only 103 Basuto guns, sent his chief constable to remind Masupha of the deadline and the consequences for disobedience. The rebel whined that Cape Colony had not provided him enough time and that the tribe was not accustomed to observe precise dates. Masupha kept armed retainers at his village for protection against arrest⁴¹ and, though his efforts to retain power for the chiefs had failed so far, held pitsos to encourage obedience to the chiefs. Magistrate Bell described Masupha as arbitrary and whimsical, a man who disclaimed subordination to colonial authority.⁴²

Magistrate Surmon later in the summer desperately needed assistance for himself and Loyalists in the similarly deteriorating predicament in Cornet Spruit District.⁴³ Loyalist Moshlangala in July attended a rebel pitso, where several speakers criticized him for surrendering his guns, another assailed him for inviting an Anglican missionary to the area without permission from rebel Chief Moletsane, and the assemblage prohibited this Loyalist from farming. Moshlangala upon his return home found that his clan had fled to the mountains.⁴⁴ Rebels "arrested" one native for giving up his guns without permission from Chief Moletsane; some of the abductors wanted to kill him.⁴⁵ Surmon reported

³⁹ Ibid., 189, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, June 29, 1880.

⁴⁰ Ibid., 193, Zakaria Mokhithlanyane before Maitin, June 29, 1880.

⁴¹ Ibid., 214, ltr. Bell to Griffith, July 13, 1880.

⁴² The Times (London), September 28, 1880, p. 11.

⁴³ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 281, ltr. Surmon to Griffith, July 17, 1880.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 274-75, Moshlangala before Surmon, July 18, 1880.

⁴⁵ Ibid., 284, Gideon Lebaking before Surmon, July 20, 1880.

further that rebels had waylaid some refugees⁴⁶ and that local insurgents had seized cattle and other property of Loyalists. The magistrate, desiring immediate protection,⁴⁷ had few police to protect Loyalists who were flocking to his station and wanted to enlist 30 European volunteers or secure 30 CMR from Palmietfontein until large numbers of troops arrived.⁴⁸ Insurgents who guarded the border in strength would not allow white messengers to pass. For Surmon to move Loyalist cattle to the Free State without a skirmish was now impossible, and, in August, he urgently requested the aid⁴⁹ of 500 Fingos in order to protect Loyalists and his post.⁵⁰ He reported that every chief in his district, except those of the Baphutis, had joined the rebels, who sent their own women, children, and cattle to refuges in the mountains.⁵¹

Magistrate Barkly, also preparing for hostilities at his post, told councilors of Letsie that he would defend himself if attacked.⁵² The outbreaks in his district he thought only temporary⁵³ and was optimistic. The magistrate had inadequate arms and ammunition but, with eight Europeans, sixteen native police, and some Loyalists, could repel at least one attack on his station. To bolster his defenses, he called for the CMR,⁵⁴ and Government officials alerted

⁴⁶ Ibid., 283, ltr. Surmon to Griffith, July 26, 1880.

⁴⁷ Ibid., 281, ltr. Surmon to Griffith, July 17, 1880.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 200, ltr. Surmon to Sprigg, July 25, 1880.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 217, ltr. Surmon to Sprigg, n.d., r. August 2, 1880.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 307, Cape Times, September 1, 1880.

⁵¹ Ibid., 299-300, ltr. Surmon, August 2, 1880.

⁵² Ibid., 199, Cape Argus reporting on Sprigg speaking in the July 24, 1880, House Assembly session.

⁵³ Ibid., 215, Cape Argus reporting on Sprigg speaking in the July 28, 1880, House Assembly session.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 199, ltr. Barkly to Sprigg, July 24, 1880.

elements of the CMY. Barkly received new armaments and some Boer reinforcements from Wepener,⁵⁵ just across the border.⁵⁶

The colonial House Assembly meanwhile deliberated on the Basuto civil strife. Prime Minister Sprigg considered a small armed incursion into Basutoland dangerous, as it might excite the numerous rebels or spell disaster, and without immediately sending troops into Basutoland, wanted both Lerothodi and Masupha arrested. While not wanting to unnecessarily alarm the Assembly, Sir Gordon feared that he might have to spend funds for war before the next session. Opposition member J. X. Merriman asked that House members be allowed to voice their opinions on the expenditure needed to crush a Basuto uprising, and Saul Solomon quickly requested assurance for a vote on funding for hostilities.⁵⁷

The rebels all the while continued their hostile activities. Lerothodi, soon to be a victim of a setback, harbored Loyalist cattle, and most natives in Thaba Bosigo District sent their cattle to the mountains as he directed.⁵⁸ Having promised to confer with his magistrate, drunken Lerothodi unsuccessfully asked the belligerent warriors filling his village to accompany him on his visit. Upon his arrival, he offered to hand back the Loyalist cattle only if Barkly returned guns to some rebels. Later, as malcontents did surround Mafateng, Lerothodi planned to attack the town, but most supporters deserted him. A majority of the natives in Thaba Bosigo District opposed and fortified their

⁵⁵ Wepener: a town in the eastern Orange Free State named after Commandant Louw Wepener, who led the Boer attack on Thaba Bosigo in the War of 1865, Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, p. 576.

⁵⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 199, ltr. Civil Commissioner Aliwal North to Sprigg, n.d., r. July 25, 1880.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 214-15, Cape Argus reporting on Sprigg speaking in the July 28, 1880, House Assembly session.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 199, ltr. Barkly to Sprigg, July 24, 1880.

villages against the rebels. Lerothodi then begrudgingly gave up most of his stolen cattle to Barkly, who distributed them to their owners and told Lerothodi to disband his 150 warriors in order to satisfy the Government.⁵⁹ Peace would come, replied the chief, only if he could harm Loyalists,⁶⁰ but he warned Masupha that stealing cattle forced natives to the Government side.⁶¹

Masupha and sons of Letsie were the major agitators. Griffith appealed to Masupha that women and children of rebel clans would suffer in a war and offered the insurgent chief one last chance to return Loyalist property and surrender guilty persons before formally declaring him a rebel liable for punishment.⁶² Masupha, thereupon, seized cattle in Thaba Bosigo District, especially from Basuto policemen.⁶³ Colonel Griffith later acknowledged that Masupha, joined by rebel Baphuti remnants, would fight to the death.⁶⁴ Letsie stopped an attack by his sons Alexander and Bereng on the Loyalists at Maseru village. Alexander, frustrated, announced his submission, but Masupha ordered him to kill more Loyalists. Chief Koadi Makhobalo, his village full of rebel spies, pledged himself to Masupha for safety. Bereng asked Koadi to help fortify Masitisi Mountain and attack George Moshesh; then Alexander requested Koadi to help oppose European troops about to cross the Little Caledon River (a false alarm).⁶⁵ According to Assistant Magistrate Davies, only a large force could manage the arrest of Bereng, who burned his court summons and did not

⁵⁹ Ibid., 277-78, ltr. Barkly to Griffith, July 25, 1880.

⁶⁰ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, p. 147.

⁶¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 272, Moleko before Maitin, July 22, 1880.

⁶² Ibid., 653, ltr. Griffith to Masupha, July 22, 1880.

⁶³ Ibid., 279, Jacob Motseki before Davies, July 27, 1880.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 218, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, August 1, 1880.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 279-80, Koadi Makhobalo before Davies, July 27, 1880.

appear to answer charges made by Griffith.⁶⁶

The Chief Magistrate, in the face of this stubbornness, issued orders in July for the somewhat undependable Letsie to seize the cattle stolen by Bereng and to arrest this son and other rebels who had molested Loyalists.⁶⁷ Letsie only recovered the stolen cattle,⁶⁸ insisting that it was not the proper time to arrest Bereng and other rebels.⁶⁹ The chief, nevertheless, forced five rebel chiefs to reimburse Loyalists for damages, to restore all stolen property, and to remove sentinels from the border.⁷⁰ Magistrate Surmon soon was able to receive armaments.⁷¹ Letsie also received orders to swiftly occupy Thaba Bosigo and prevent the rebels from holding it; otherwise, Griffith would not guarantee the stability of Basutoland or the safety of Letsie.⁷² The Chief Magistrate thought him too cowardly to occupy Thaba Bosigo, even though the Government would assist and assume all responsibility for methods the chief used to curtail rebellion.⁷³ If the majority supported the paramount chief at a pitso at Thaba Bosigo, conjectured Griffith, the fortifications there would vanish; otherwise, troops would have to help arrest both Masupha and Lerothodi.⁷⁴

The combative, offensive posture of Masupha also influenced Chief Magistrate Griffith. Masupha contended that Loyalists deserved punishment for giving up arms without permission and that, as a chief, he could seize cattle.⁷⁵

⁶⁶ Ibid., 288, ltr. Davies to Griffith, July 31, 1880.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 294, ltr. Griffith to Letsie, July 27, 1880.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 293, ltr. Letsie to Griffith, July 30, 1880.

⁶⁹ Ibid., 293, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, August 4, 1880.

⁷⁰ Ibid., 267, ltr. Surmon to Sprigg, August 11, 1880.

⁷¹ Ibid., 269, ltr. Surmon to Sprigg, August 13, 1880.

⁷² Ibid., 294, ltr. Griffith to Letsie, July 31, 1880.

⁷³ Ibid., 218, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, August 1, 1880.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 221, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, August 4, 1880.

Masupha said that a circular from Letsie, which called for expulsion from their villages of all natives who did not surrender their guns upon command,⁷⁶ was circulated at Thaba Bosigo in violation of tribal custom and that the actions of the paramount chief were untraditional. By claiming Thaba Bosigo, the sacred tribal mountain, Masupha angered Letsie. The rebel chief, though supposedly only repairing the mountain fortress, at first refused to allow Griffith to attend the pitso there and escorted him out of the village below. Later receiving the consent of the evasive Masupha to ascend the mountain by the only path, Colonel Griffith at every bend found a stone wall and at the top found battlements two layers thick and a clear water spring.⁷⁷ The Chief Magistrate, after examining the fortress, definitely wanted troops committed. Though Masupha had threatened to fight Letsie unless the paramount chief came alone, Letsie had induced Jonathan and other loyal chiefs to accompany him.⁷⁸

Letsie at the August pitso appeared powerless beside and just as deceitful as Masupha. Jonathan attempted to persuade Masupha to behave, but the rebel feared transportation to Robben Island⁷⁹ eventually.⁸⁰ Secretary Ayliffe conveyed orders to Masupha, who would not have to face execution, to surrender himself to Letsie. According to his rank in the tribe, each rebel with Masu-

⁷⁵ Ibid., 285, Cape Argus reporting on messages of Griffith, August 6, 8, 11, 1880.

⁷⁶ Ibid., 191, ltr. Surmon to Griffith, June 24, 1880.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 285-86, Cape Argus reporting on messages of Griffith, August 6, 8, 11, 1880.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 221, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, August 7, 1880.

⁷⁹ Robben Island: an island in Table Bay comprising about three square miles, where political prisoners and the incurably sick resided, Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, p. 437.

⁸⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 268, Telegram from Webster Special Correspondent in Basutoland, August 10, 13, 1880.

pha would pay a fine, and Letsie would surrender all documents found with the rebels. If Masupha balked, the paramount chief would hold the mountain until the CMR arrived.⁸¹ Letsie stalled for time and, if the Government did not force an arrest, which would strain too much his authority, promised to fine Masupha, but natives present doubted his sincerity.⁸² The rebel chiefs, continued Chief Letsie, feared punishment, and, preferring to settle matters by himself, he asked Cape Town not to exile Masupha,⁸³ who vowed to hand back all stolen cattle only if Letsie announced opposition to the PPA.⁸⁴

After the pitso, the rebels briefly restricted Letsie to Thaba Bosigo in order to use his name to stir rebellion.⁸⁵ Pleading inability to coerce Masupha, the paramount chief wanted to leave the mountain to bring back a stronger force. Griffith ordered him to remain and send for more warriors⁸⁶ but afterwards allowed him to decide if it was wise to remain.⁸⁷ Letsie, returning to his village, whined that his tribe did not support him and voiced fear that Masupha would kill or imprison him.⁸⁸ The paramount chief, nevertheless, told his sons of his intentions to alienate the whites against each other, because Britain did not sympathize with the PPA, and because the act had become a partisan issue in the Cape Parliament.⁸⁹

Magistrate Barkly, who decided that Letsie was too unreliable to control

⁸¹ Ibid., 269, ltr. Ayliffe to Griffith, August 13, 1880.

⁸² Ibid., 268, Telegram from Webster . . . Basutoland, August 13, 14, 1880.

⁸³ Ibid., 656, ltr. Letsie to Griffith, August 13, 1880.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 657, Josiah Mojela Letsie before Griffith, August 17, 1880.

⁸⁵ Ibid., 658, N'tho.

⁸⁶ Ibid., 269, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, August 15, 1880.

⁸⁷ Ibid., 658, ltr. Griffith to Letsie, August 17, 1880.

⁸⁸ Ibid., 284, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, n.d., r. August 22, 1880.

⁸⁹ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 514.

the situation, thought troops might bolster him. If Letsie defected, however, the civil war would spread, though troops on the Free State border could soon clear the rebels.⁹⁰ While the Letsie clan believed its chief fooling the Government until fully prepared to rebel, Barkly disbelieved this rumor but thought timid Letsie must take stronger measures against the rebels. The magistrate doubted that the paramount chief would arrest Lerothodi, who would only apologize and repeat his crimes; thus, Barkly hoped to arm loyal natives and with Letsie surround and render Lerothodi impotent.

Arthur Barkly at the same time advised on colonial military strategy. Sprigg did not want to defend isolated posts like Mafeteng, but Barkly argued that the town was a haven for refugee traders and Loyalists, on the main road, in open country, and an excellent base for military operations in western Basutoland. Masitisi Mountain, recently fortified by rebels, was only a one-day journey from Mafeteng and was vulnerable to attack by troops from that side and from the Maseru direction. The Fraser store, only one and a half miles from Mafeteng, needed protection, because the employees there were militarily useless except for escort duty. The magistrate advised against sending troops into Cornet Spruit District from Quthing, because the road from Pathlalla to Mhales Hoek exhibited a number of configurations where a small force could hold off numerous troops; instead, soldiers from Mafeteng could relieve Surmon. Colonial troops, according to Barkly, would have to invest Thaba Bosigo.⁹¹

Besides magistrates and Loyalists, Basutoland traders faced intimidation in the Basuto Civil War. At a secret pitso of Masupha, who had decided to

⁹⁰ E.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 222, ltr. Barkly to Sprigg, August 8, 1880.

⁹¹ Ibid., 266-67, ltr. Barkly to Sprigg, August 11, 1880.

attack trading posts, Chief Bereng Letsie also designed to assault the posts in order to steal goods to outfit his clan.⁹² Assistant Magistrate Davies reported that one trader, having received threats to abandon his store, asked for protection and permission to withdraw to Maseru if danger increased. The merchant saw grain transported by rebels from the Telle River via Roman Hoek to the Maluti Mountains for stockpiling.⁹³ A close friend to the Basutos was Samuel Brummage, a trader at Korokoro. The nearest chief, Koadi Makhobalo, told Brummage that he feared assassination by other chiefs if he surrendered his gun and that the Brummage store was in danger.⁹⁴ In July, another trader, Mr. Trower, and his helpers encountered harassment and thievery from Alexander Letsie and his clan while attempting to remove goods from the abandoned Brummage shop to Maseru and hence never transferred the merchandise.⁹⁵

Jonathan Molappo, in reaction to this menace, ordered his clan to tidy the Brummage store and carry off the remaining goods for safekeeping. He appealed for Cape Colony to strictly enforce its rule over Basutoland.⁹⁶ For apprehending the looters of the Brummage shop, Griffith thanked Letsie, and he told the chief to levy fines to secure compensation for Brummage. The Chief Magistrate intended to arrest and send to Maseru for punishment the chiefs who instigated the Korokoro trouble and who received stolen merchandise.⁹⁷

Traders, nevertheless, considered themselves in a precarious position by

⁹² Ibid., 183-84, Affidavit of Samuel Brummage, June 28, 1880; Ibid., 184, ltr. Bell to Griffith, June 25, 1880.

⁹³ Ibid., 172, ltr. Davies to Griffith, June 21, 1880.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 183-84, Affidavit of Samuel Brummage, June 28, 1880.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 282, Jan Baduza before Davies, July 26, 1880; cf., Ibid., 282-83, August before Davies, July 26, 1880.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 292, ltr. Jonathan Molappo to Trower, July 27, 1880.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 655-56, ltr. Griffith to Letsie; August 5, 1880.

remaining in Basutoland, and some fled to the Orange Free State.⁹⁸ Griffith, prepared for the worst, noted that most traders had surrendered their arms and were at the mercy of the insurgents.⁹⁹ Magistrate Surmon asked if whites in Cornet Spruit District might retain their arms secretly until restoration of peace. Traders in the district wanted to keep their guns,¹⁰⁰ as the Government refused to compensate shopowners for losses. Surmon, asking merchants not to remove their goods immediately, called for more rifles and ammunition in order to arm the traders and loyal natives with him.¹⁰¹ Basutoland merchants wanted military security, because they were losing income from diminishing business, and feared that troops would not relieve them soon. Eventually, traders used their remaining arms to defend Cape sovereignty in Basutoland, though they did not relish risking their lives and losing profits in a thankless duty.¹⁰²

As disaffection spilled over the Basuto border, Magistrate Austen in Quthing, unable to stifle rebel activity and the beguiler Letsie, urged reinforcement of the troop camps at Palmietfontein and Fort Hartley to hearten Loyalists. Because local rebels threatened to kill first natives who had aided against Morosi and who subsequently had surrendered their weapons, Loyalists fled to the Masitisi station.¹⁰³ Thereafter, Lerothodi commanded Quthing natives to join him in Basutoland or lose their cattle.¹⁰⁴ Magistrate Austen in

⁹⁸ Ibid., 198, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, July 27, 1880.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 169, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, June 23, 1880; Ibid., 273, ltr. Traders at Mohales Hoek, July 12, 1880; Ibid., 213, ltr. Davies to Griffith, July 14, 1880.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid., 273, ltr. Surmon to Griffith, July 12, 1880.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 275, ltr. Surmon to Griffith, July 11, 1880.

¹⁰² Ibid., 302, ltr. Traders to Griffith, August 6, 1880.

¹⁰³ Ibid., 194-95, ltr. Austen to Griffith, July 3, 1880.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 295-96, Tetella before Austen, August 5, 1880.

August noted that rebels preponderated in his district and guarded the drifts¹⁰⁵ on its borders. Loyalists would fight back if supported, he said, but if the rebels gained the first advantage, the rebellion would grow.¹⁰⁶ The magistrate advised a large military offensive, because rebels were inciting the Herschel District Fingos and the Tembus,¹⁰⁷ and Letsie had asked the Pondos¹⁰⁸ to help him obstruct the PPA and rebel.¹⁰⁹

No natives, wrote Chief Magistrate Brownlee of Griqualand East, helped him enforce the PPA among Basutos residing there. Rebels intimidated loyal Basutos living here into insurgency. Brownlee at Matatiele held a meeting and hinted that Governor Frere would no longer apply the PPA to Basutos in Griqualand if they disarmed voluntarily.¹¹⁰

The Orange Free State took stringent measures as it again unfortunately became subjected to Basuto annoyances as rebels hounded Loyalists into Boer territory. Across the frontier, Chief George Moshesh led 2,000 cattle, and President Johannes Brand¹¹¹ allowed these refugees to remain until colonial troops

¹⁰⁵ Drifts: Glaciers formed these stratified or unstratified deposits of clay, sand, gravel, and boulders in river beds.

¹⁰⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 295, ltr. Austen to Ayliffe, August 5, 1880.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 297, ltr. Austen to Ayliffe, August 24, 1880.

¹⁰⁸ Pondos: Suffering severely from Zulu incursions, this tribe almost became Zulu vassals. After the Xhosa tribe disintegrated, the Pondos, though primitive and factious, remained the only independent tribe in the Eastern Cape Province. Umquikela became paramount chief in 1867 and showed much hostility toward Cape Colony; therefore, Frere withdrew recognition of the leadership of this chief in 1878, Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, pp. 397-98.

¹⁰⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 195, ltr. Austen to Griffith, July 3, 1880.

¹¹⁰ Brownlee, Basuto War, p. 8.

¹¹¹ D.S.A.B., I, 111-13, 115: Johannes Brand: Elected to the Cape Parliament in 1854, Brand in 1864 was unanimously elected President of the Orange Free State and subsequently was re-elected four times. Though the ominous and unresolved Basuto affairs in the 1880's damaged the rural Free State economy, Brand stymied the Wodehouse attempts to use the Boer-Basuto wars as an excuse to subjugate the Boers to Britain. The president balked at joining a British

arrived, but only after consultation with Griffith, who admitted inability to protect the Loyalists.¹¹² Governor Frere belatedly sanctioned the Loyalist flight, their disarmament by the Boers after crossing the Free State border, Loyalist occupancy wherever farmers allowed, Loyalist payment for grazing, and their subjection to Free State law.¹¹³ Rebels in August twice unsuccessfully attempted to steal cattle which Loyalists were escorting from Mafeteng to Korsberg in the Orange Free State. The Republic then refused to admit these Loyalists,¹¹⁴ for the Free State, argued the irritated Boer Executive Council, had no room for the refugees, who burdened the citizens. President Brand tried to avoid placement of military forces on the Basuto border. Volunteer Free State cavalry posted in Basutoland might incite border Basutos, endanger Boer farms, and force the Boer Government to ring with troops the Basuto frontier from the Orange River up to Harrismith;¹¹⁵ instead, field cornets¹¹⁶ enforced pass rules to keep out rebels.¹¹⁷

The limited benefits of rearming harassed Loyalists became apparent.

After the Berea police warned one Hlubi tribesman that Masupha would attack

South African confederation until London promoted justice for Boers in the diamond fields, yet, at the same time, Brand obstructed Afrikaner nationalism. In 1881, the provocative attitude of the rebel Basutos and the desire of Britain to abandon this tribe revived in Brand his previous apprehension about the tribe. Anarchy in Basutoland caused frequent border violations; thus, in late 1883, Brand pressured the Imperial Government to once again administer Basutoland.

¹¹² B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 216-17, ltr. Brand to Frere, n.d., r. July 7, 1880.

¹¹³ Ibid., 217, ltr. Frere to Brand, July 29, 1880.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 303, Jonkman Maila before Rolland, August 2, 1880.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 200, ltr. Brand to Frere, July 26, 1880.

¹¹⁶ Field cornets: These Boer military officials raised commando units and later acquired civilian duties, and they worked closely with Cape Colony magistrates, Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, p. 167.

¹¹⁷ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 267, ltr. Barkly to Sprigg, August 11, 1880.

him, he and his party, rearmed, drove back 600 rebel raiders but lost their tangible property and themselves fled. A Boer justice of the peace settled some of the refugees group at Ladybrand.¹¹⁸ One rearmed headman in the Berea District lost his cattle but with his party escaped from an ambush on the way to Maseru.¹¹⁹ Although Leribe District Loyalists received 600 surrendered guns to protect themselves,¹²⁰ rebels attacking their villages beat and threatened these tribesmen. Some of these natives with the cattle of Molappo then joined Masupha.¹²¹ The Chief Magistrate finally ordered Magistrate Bell to fall back on Maseru, because roaming rebel marauders were murdering armed Loyalists in the northern districts.¹²² Bell instead constructed a defense and asked for arms, ammunition, and a 50-man infantry garrison.¹²³

Concerning Loyalist views and counteractions in the Civil War, Chief Koadi indicated that only troops could save the Loyalists, some of whom already were wavering. Troops in Basutoland, long overdue, would induce natives to desert the rebel chiefs, who would then surrender, whereas colonial apathy allowed rebels time to fortify strongholds.¹²⁴ Another tribesman advised the Government to move in trained troops, not volunteers, and warned of Loyalist desertions should Cape Colony not dispatch soldiers.¹²⁵ As Chief Sofonia and his followers feared to travel because of the rebels, he threatened to go into hiding if

¹¹⁸ Ibid., 289-90, Tukuny before Bell, July 23, 1880.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 290, Mokhitle before Bell, July 27, 1880.

¹²⁰ Ibid., 216, Cape Argus reporting the July 29, 1880, House Assembly session.

¹²¹ Ibid., 291, Molupo before Bell, July 27, 1880.

¹²² Ibid., 653, ltr. Griffith to Masupha, July 22, 1880.

¹²³ Ibid., 287, ltr. Bell to Sprigg, July 24, 1880.

¹²⁴ Ibid., 296-97, Cape Argus reporting on message of Koadi Makhobalo, August 6, 1880.

¹²⁵ Ibid., 660, ltr. Seta Matele to Griffith, August 23, 1880.

Cape Town did not commit troops.¹²⁶ A compromise settlement, indicated other Loyalists, would not insure their safe return home.¹²⁷ By giving intelligence and exposing insurgent weak points to the Government, Loyalists hamstrung rebels.¹²⁸ One Loyalist advised Griffith of the rebel fortifications at Thaba Bosigo and helped the Government supply fortified trading posts until forced to flee because of threats.¹²⁹ One Loyalist chief with a European bodyguard confiscated rebel farms.¹³⁰ Rebel leaders themselves, according to Chief Tsekelo, had no specific goal, and cold, hunger, and guilty consciences supposedly dominated at Thaba Bosigo. The distressed rebels feared to plow fields or sleep in their own villages, and captured cattle had insufficient fodder at the sacred mountain. Tsekelo asked for colonial troops in each district, requested ammunition for Loyalists, and warned that rebels must receive cautious and generous treatment.¹³¹ Therefore, Governor Frere, unable to estimate how many Basutos supported the rebels, recommended clemency for the insurgents.¹³² One angry Loyalist told Sir Bartle to relay to the London Government that Cape Colony must delay the evil PPA for two years, as by that time, rebel power would have dissipated. He added that Basutos would not fight their brethren in behalf of Cape Colony.¹³³

¹²⁶ Ibid., 300, ltr. Sefonia to Griffith, August 6, 1880.

¹²⁷ Ibid., 306, Cape Argus reporting on telegram from Maseru, August 25, 1880.

¹²⁸ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 511.

¹²⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 280, Daniel Mothlabane before Davies, July 27, 1880.

¹³⁰ Ibid., 298, ltr. Sprigg to Frere, August 26, 1880.

¹³¹ Ibid., 659, ltr. Tsekelo to Griffith, August 14, 1880.

¹³² Ibid., 197, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, August 13, 1880; cf., Ibid., 198, Frere to Kimberley, July 27, 1880.

¹³³ Ibid., 659-60, ltr. SETHA Matele to Griffith, August 23, 1880.

While one of these brethren, Masupha, remained obstinate, other rebels also persisted. This chief demanded the return of the guns that other chiefs had surrendered without his permission.¹³⁴ He, as an example to others, refused to give up Loyalist stock and killed some in front of Letsie.¹³⁵ Lerothodi abducted three policemen and incarcerated them at Thaba Bosigo.¹³⁶ Another rebel chief declined to return Loyalist cattle, saying that he would lose his own in reprisal.¹³⁷

The Northern Post at Aliwal North,¹³⁸ in editorial reaction to the outbreak, wrote,

It is painful to see the helpless and ineffective way in which the Government is allowing the control of affairs to slip out of their hands. The utterly feeble and ineffective manner in which affairs have been conducted hitherto is bringing the colony into contempt and ridicule and daily adding to the proportions of the difficulties which must be coped with in Basutoland.¹³⁹

Asking the disarmed to calm the dissidents, complained the Cape Argus, was not realistic. The Cape Times, however, asserted that Letsie would disarm and stressed that this chief, by occupying Thaba Bosigo, had confirmed his loyalty.¹⁴⁰

It was evident, after all, that Cape Colony was defaulting on its responsibility under the Second Treaty of Aliwal North (1869) to protect the Orange Free State from Basuto harassment. Governor Frere needed to deal with the re-

¹³⁴ Ibid., 270-71, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, August 24, 1880.

¹³⁵ Ibid., 650-51, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, August 18, 1880; cf., Ibid., 297, ltr. Austen to Ayliffe, August 24, 1880.

¹³⁶ Ibid., 298, ltr. Sprigg to Frere, August 26, 1880.

¹³⁷ Ibid., 287, ltr. Bell to Griffith, July 25, 1880.

¹³⁸ Aliwal North: Sir Harry Smith, to commemorate his victory at Aliwal, India, over the Sikhs, founded in 1849 this chief town in its district on the northern Cape Colony border, Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, p. 14.

¹³⁹ The Times (London), September 2, 1880, p. 3.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., September 6, 1880, p. 6.

bels harshly, and Prime Minister Sprigg, in view of the serious predicament, should have arranged for funding to support a large mobilization and early war. The dissatisfied magistrates, who fortunately took precautions, could not alone halt rebel aggression or protect Loyalists. Surmon either should have risked his position with his available forces or evacuated. Barkly, who falsely encouraged Loyalists, did not realize that Lerothodi negotiated in bad faith and wanted the paramountcy through civil war. Reliance on Letsie, whose actions encouraged rebellion, was misplaced by the magistrate. The predicament of traders further indicated the need for troops in Basutoland. Griffith could have evacuated trading posts which contained supplies valuable to the rebels, but he had no force available to stop the looting. The Cape Government should have paid total compensation for losses to merchants who stayed on, as they helped defend colonial authority.

Further, the Loyalists bore the disadvantage of having undergone disarmament. They did not fight continuously or very successfully, were not dedicated, were not united under leaders, and could not protect their magistrates. Some loyal natives excused and underestimated the rebels and wanted the colony to handle all the protective fighting, however, others fought gallantly to uphold colonial law.

The rebels, on the other hand, envisioned specific goals in the civil war and, despite ample time and opportunity to surrender, instead fomented insurrection along the entire Cape frontier. Large, powerful, and victorious were the mobilizing rebel forces. Masupha, falsely accusing Letsie while taking advantage of him as a symbolic stooge, attempted to usurp tribal authority and would not alter his stand, because he spoke from a strong position. Only to overthrow his brother Jonathan did Joel, who Masupha manipulated, turn

rebel. Letsie fooled Griffith, because, while probably trying with loyal chiefs to mollify Masupha, he could not protect Loyalists, conspired with Masupha at Thaba Bosigo, and had no intention to coerce the chief or hold the mountain and dismantle its fortifications. Realizing the rebels to be dominant, the paramount chief only superficially placated the Government and feigned loyalty by symbolic actions. He was a traitor; Frere should have deposed him.

SPRIGG EXAMINES CONDITIONS IN BASUTOLAND

Sir Gordon Sprigg, initiating one final effort to avoid military confrontation, asked Joseph Orpen, Commandant Frederick Schermbrucker,¹⁴¹ and Brigadier-General Charles Mansfield Clarke,¹⁴² Commandant-General of Cape colonial forces, to accompany him to Maseru to restore order.¹⁴³ Sprigg also sought the help of the Orange Free State in preserving the peace.¹⁴⁴ While the party left Cape Town, the rebel Basutos were gaining strength. The sight of the Prime Minister traveling with no armed escort heartened insurgents; Greswell believes that

¹⁴¹ S.A.D.N.B., p. 330. Frederick Schermbrucker: a soldier and later Cape Colony cabinet minister. Born in Schweinfurt-on-Main, Germany, he was invited to Cape Colony in 1867 with military settlers. In the East Cape Province, he quickly assumed prominence and entered Parliament in 1868. In 1875, he moved to the Orange Free State and edited the Bloemfontein Express. He became a member of the Legislative Council at Cape Town in 1882.

¹⁴² Who Was Who 1897-1915 (London: 1935), p. 140. Sir Charles M. Clarke: Entering the British Army in 1856, Clarke served in New Zealand from 1861-66 and in the Zulu War and became Deputy Adjutant-General in Ireland from 1886-88 and at headquarters from 1892-93. He later assumed the post of governor at Malta from 1903-07.

¹⁴³ Theal, South Africa, XI, 60-61; cf., B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 270, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, August 24, 1880.

¹⁴⁴ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 265, ltr. Frere to Brand, August 10, 1880.

600 to 1,000 soldiers should have accompanied Sprigg.

Some Loyalists, falsifying the situation, sought to shackle colonial relief against the powerful rebels. At a pitso at Maseru on August 25, 1880, Sprigg spoke with Tsekelo, Sofonia, and Mtsane, all Loyalist sons of Moshesh. Timidity by the colony, said Tsekelo, would endanger negotiations with insurgents,¹⁴⁵ yet he warned the Government to act only by proclamation, because, if Cape Colony employed troops, the tribe would think the rebels had a legitimate grievance. Other chiefs counseled Government patience, use of no unnecessary force, and agreement not to take guns forcibly from villages, as this last action might precipitate a conflict. Aware that younger chiefs prized arms, Tsekelo feigned ignorance when told that chiefs had ordered their men to hoard guns, yet Lerothodi and Bereng previously had visited the diamond fields and had urged their men to buy arms. Other Loyalists considered the PPA a pretext for rebellion and asked Sprigg if Basutos who left their homeland might keep their arms.

Tsekelo continued that he had stopped the migration of the people in his ward, who, because of fear, had almost joined Masupha to help fortify Thaba Bosigo. Natives atop the mountain, who he considered as mere criminals, rumored that, if Sprigg wanted peace, he must offer amnesty to all, remove the magistrates, and allow Letsie to collect the hut tax. Tsekelo thought the rebels weakening, and natives stopped sending grain to feed workers at Thaba Bosigo. At public meetings, however, chiefs still feared to speak honestly. Chief Sofonia alone believed that the rebels would rejoice if not restrained and that amnesty for them and no compensation for Loyalists would allow insurgents to steal all Loyalist cattle after Sprigg departed.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁵ Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 80-81.

At Morija,¹⁴⁷ Chief Letsie, further hindering colonial action, verbally circumvented Sprigg and stalled until Griffith arrived.¹⁴⁸ The paramount chief complimented Sir Gordon for traveling without an armed escort and, alleging that brandy caused the unrest,¹⁴⁹ asked why the Prime Minister allowed the illegal importation of liquor into Basutoland. Sprigg in turn asked Letsie why other chiefs had surrendered no guns, why rebels built fortifications, and why loyal natives lost their cattle. Continually changing the subject from the PPA, the chief grumbled that the tribe did not recognize his paramountcy, that his son Lerothodi was insane from brandy, but finally announced that in two years the Basutos would readily give up their arms.

Chief Letsie, furthermore, excused and would not adjudicate the criminal conduct of Masupha. Masupha, fearful of punishment, might not attend as planned, said Letsie, and as a madman was not responsible for his actions. The paramount chief entreated that the Basutos were ignorant people and that Sprigg must excuse their failings. Letsie humbly advised Sir Gordon to visit Masupha at Thaba Bosigo. As the Prime Minister hesitated to go there without an armed force, Letsie, guaranteeing safety to the company, offered an escort for courtesy and laughed that Sprigg feared a drunk. Sir Gordon then asked the chief to pacify the Cornet Spruit District.¹⁵⁰

Sprigg on August 30 next met with George Moshesh, now returned from the Free State, to discuss how to weaken the belligerent but apprehensive rebels.

¹⁴⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 317-19, Cape Times account of pitso at Maseru, August 25, 1880.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 297, ltr. Sprigg to Frere, August 24, 1880.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 298, ltr. Sprigg to Frere, August 27, 1880.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 297-98, ltr. Sprigg to Frere, August 26, 1880.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 311-13, Interview between Sprigg and Letsie, August 26, 1880; In Berea District, Boers sold brandy without licenses, Ibid., 319, Cape Times account of pitso at Maseru, August 25, 1880.

Insurgents had fortified and supplied three mountains. Masupha perched atop Thaba Bosigo, Bereng atop Masitisi, and Lerothodi atop Kolo. Though Letsie had stopped three assaults by Masupha against Chief George, the approximately 100 followers of George, feeling abandoned by the Government, began deserting. Chief Masupha, learned the Prime Minister, refusing to meet Sprigg at Thaba Bosigo, had not traveled to the pitso at Morija, because he feared his treacherous assassination, similar to an episode in the past (Supra, p.42 , n.82), and CMR occupation of his fortress. The CMR units camped on the Orange Free State border reassured numerous Loyalists.

Chief George, in addition, indicated other preferences and views. He supported the Sprigg suggestion of placing 2,000 troops on the Basuto frontier but advised only the arrest and punishment by magistrates of the rebel leaders; Loyalists could return and receive compensation. The Prime Minister next inquired what reaction would occur if the CMR crossed into Basutoland and 2,000 Zulus entered from Natal. The rebels would fight but eventually flee to the mountains, replied George, and the Zulus would seize all rebel cattle. There were approximately 4,000 insurgents, and numerous crestfallen tribesmen, because they would not desert their chiefs, turned rebel. George said that scores of Loyalists, who outnumbered rebels, would help against Masupha if Letsie availed himself; sons of the paramount chief then might desert Masupha, who announced that Letsie only feigned loyalty and instigated him. As numbers in the Masupha clan wanted to end their insurgency, the introduction of a large military force could induce throngs to desert this rebel chief, and officials, declared George, could not collect the hut tax that year or the next if rebels remained armed. He explained that the PPA perhaps did not cause the civil war but that Masupha used the act to excite Lerothodi, Moletsane, Putsane, Smith, and Bereng. Basutos hoarded guns, because they wanted protection against in-

vasion from the Orange Free State, on whom they expected to wreak vengeance should Cape Colony eventually fight the Boers.

Disarmament, continued George, was not the sole reason for disaffection, as the rebels detested all European authority and would resist coercion in the face of eventual defeat. Freedom from the magistrates and the £1 hut tax, which allegedly impoverished numerous tribesmen with several huts, elated insurgents. George confessed that prophetesses undermined the Government by vilifying whites and the British army and by urging punishment for whites and natives in Basutoland who aided colonial authorities.¹⁵¹

Concerning the safety of the Prime Minister during his visit, Masupha announced that the killing of Sprigg would aid the rebel cause,¹⁵² and, if someone murdered Sprigg, declared a prophetess, rebels could drive all the whites out of Basutoland. Sir Gordon had received threats not to attend the Maseru pitso, but the insurgents did not attack the Prime Minister because of expectations that he would not travel through rebel-controlled territory.¹⁵³

Joseph Orpen, after the pitsos, brought Sprigg a letter from Letsie, still the rebel vindicator, saying that the rebel chiefs acknowledged their crimes and begged for mercy; thus, the Prime Minister proposed the punishment of hostiles by fines.¹⁵⁴ Rebels obtained for themselves the intercession of Chief Letsie, who had recommended fines and professed that the PPA, which he now declared would always defy realization, caused the furor.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵¹ Ibid., 314-16, Interview between Sprigg and George Moshesh, August 30, 1880; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, pp. 27-28.

¹⁵² Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 142.

¹⁵³ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 316, Interview between Sprigg and George Moshesh, August 30, 1880.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 299, ltr. Sprigg to Ayliffe, September 6, 1880.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 319-20, ltr. Sprigg to Frere, September 9, 1880.

The Prime Minister, contemplating his evaluations, then traveled to Leribe District to restore order. The PPA, he adamantly asserted, had not caused the civil war; Orpen and Griffith agreed that the rebel leaders had as prime objectives independence and the expulsion of whites.¹⁵⁶ The Prime Minister on his way home spoke with the Fraser brothers, prominent Basutoland traders, then preparing to fortify their main store. Sir Gordon scoffed at their warning that rebellion was inevitable,¹⁵⁷ however, he believed that only a large force could check the rebels and support Loyalists.¹⁵⁸

Newspapers hinged final appraisal of the Sprigg visit on future contingencies. The Eastern Province Herald (Cape Colony), though censuring him for begging for peace, otherwise lauded Sir Gordon and urged the crushing of Masupha before his position improved.¹⁵⁹ The Pall Mall Gazette (London) admitted that if the mission resulted in the submission of rebel leaders, the Prime Minister might avoid parliamentary trouble.¹⁶⁰ If the Sprigg journey seemed to his opponents at Cape Town and in England a sincere effort to avoid war, announced another tabloid, he would have dismissed the sinister motive attributed to his mission.¹⁶¹

In retrospect, Sir Gordon should have requested an escort of versatile colonial troops at the pitsos to impress upon rebels and Loyalists alike the intent and capability of Cape Colony. Sprigg took with him people who could correctly assess the crisis and propose solutions, and, through excellent ad-

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 332, ltr. Sprigg to Ayliffe, September 15, 1880.

¹⁵⁷ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 142-43.

¹⁵⁸ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 304, ltr. Sprigg to Ayliffe, September 1, 1880.

¹⁵⁹ The Times (London), October 1, 1880, p. 3.

¹⁶⁰ Pall Mall Gazette (London), October 8, 1880, p. 5.

¹⁶¹ The Times (London), October 13, 1880, p. 4.

vice given by traders and Chief Sofonia, he received sufficient reasons why and assurances that troops would help restore order but still did not realize the grave situation. As the Government had a moral obligation to protect Loyalists with troops, Sir Gordon should have ignored Chiefs Letsie, Tsekelo, George, and others who belittled the rebel threat, backed down, and wanted the Government to do likewise.

THE RECALL OF GOVERNOR FRERE

Prime Minister Sprigg alone did not meet obstructions, as Governor Frere had found his own policies condemned. Prime Minister Gladstone recalled the governor in May, 1880, because the position of Frere on the affairs of South Africa conflicted with that of the Home Government.¹⁶² Frere was condemned because of his alleged design for an unjust and unprovoked Zulu War,¹⁶³ Zulu war disasters, the failure of confederation, and the Liberal Party search for peace at whatever price in South Africa.¹⁶⁴ Numerous people wanted to relieve Sir Bartle¹⁶⁵ because of his involvement in local party politics in support of Sprigg.¹⁶⁶ Godfrey Lagden says that the governor, had he remained, might have concluded the Basuto war victoriously and quickly.¹⁶⁷

Frere, his performance frustrated, complained that people for partisan

¹⁶² Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 252 (1880), 459, Mr. Gladstone speaking, May 25, 1880.

¹⁶³ Pall Mall Gazette (London), August 3, 1880, p. 4.

¹⁶⁴ Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 90; cf., Pall Mall Gazette (London), July 7, 1880, p. 4.

¹⁶⁵ Pall Mall Gazette (London), August 3, 1880, p. 4.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., August 11, 1880, p. 4.

¹⁶⁷ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 514.

purposes spread numerous rumors in England regarding the Basuto civil strife.¹⁶⁸

Troublemakers told the Basutos that he was a tyrant and that his recall illustrated British governmental reprobation of his Basuto policy. While Britain, insisted Sir Bartle, could support the PPA, or, if it disapproved of the act, could forbid subsequently required military action against the Basutos, the deliberations of the Home Government convinced the colonists that the Crown was shirking its military prerogative, thus leaving Cape Colony to act on its own responsibility.¹⁶⁹ Sprigg would agree to London disallowing armed action against the rebels, because, constitutionally, Queen Victoria as Commander-in-Chief commanded colonial troops.¹⁷⁰

The Colonial Office, in addition, mistakenly excoriated Sir Bartle after he had left Cape Town in the autumn following the outbreak of the rebellion. Kimberley blared that, "It is inconceivable that a Governor of Sir Bartle Frere's undoubted abilities could lend his support to such blunderings [colonial military intervention in Basutoland] as he appears to have done."¹⁷¹ The secretary hypocritized the following year by admitting that the Sprigg ministry could rightfully combat the Basutos, because, though the natives were subjects

¹⁶⁸ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 163, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, May 30, 1880.

¹⁶⁹ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 503, 516. The British Undersecretary of State for Colonial Affairs said in Parliament that the British Government could not prevent the CMR from entering Basutoland, Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 252 (1880), 645-46, Mr. Duff speaking, May 28, 1880.

¹⁷⁰ Martineau, Frere, II, 383.

¹⁷¹ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 144. Major-General Sir Henry Clifford and Sir George C. Strahan served as administrators until a new governor arrived. Ibid. Dictionary of National Biography (London: 1931), IV, 522. Sir Henry Clifford: Clifford, born in Dorsetshire, England, came to South Africa with an army commission and fought the Gaikas and Boers in the 1840's. He received the Victoria Cross in the Crimea, fought in China in 1857-58, and, as he knew much about Bantu warfare, easily supervised all field communications in the Zulu campaign of 1879.

of the Queen, responsible ministers at Cape Town administered the tribe.¹⁷²

It is evident, in conclusion, that the Gladstone ministry either should have announced formally its concurrence with Cape decisions or pressured their revocation; Kimberley instead crippled official British credibility. Some parties encouraged Basuto insurgents and undermined Sir Bartle, while some British citizens falsified the Basuto crisis.

CAPE COLONY MOBILIZES FOR WAR

In regard to the background on colonial mobilization, the Cape Government in Parliament never formally declared a state of rebellion in Basutoland. Preparations for war began, and Tylden alleges that Griffith anxiously awaited rebel armed resistance in order to start the war.

Theal, in the certainty of belligerent rebel intent, considers the rebellion the ". . . most formidable attempt ever made by natives in South Africa to throw off European supremacy. . . . It was only British power that the natives had any respect for." The rebels, says Tylden, could mass 23,000 mounted warriors, though each unit would not fight outside its own ward except on raids. Lerothodi built schantzen¹⁷³ atop Masitisi Mountain, which guarded on the south and west the village of his father. Cooperation from other rebellious tribes, however, disappeared after an initial accord.¹⁷⁴

It is controvertible if the Sprigg ministry took decisive measures against

¹⁷² Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 259 (1881), 1792, Earl of Kimberley speaking, March 24, 1881; cf., De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p. 268.

¹⁷³ Schantzen: three-sided ramparts on hillsides that guarded strategic habitats or military positions.

¹⁷⁴ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 142-45.

the threat. The Government, according to the Pall Mall Gazette, so confidently expected speedy rebel submission that it did not ask for a vote on military expenditures before Parliament adjourned, as Opposition leaders had asked (Supra, p. 76, n. 57), and for Sprigg to have sought consent for a Basuto war would have meant risking a reversal of the favorable vote on his policy in June. The ministry, argues the Gazette, though somewhat welcoming a war, nevertheless failed to prepare for hostilities despite warnings from officials and missionaries.¹⁷⁵ However, the CMR, by July 7 placed on emergency footing,¹⁷⁶ had a directive to enter Basutoland and to garrison Maseru, Mafeteng, and Mohales Hoek; 50 whites and 200 Fingos received orders to garrison the fort at Palmietfontein. The chiefs, believed Sprigg, would declare themselves after the placement of CMR garrisons; then the ministry could determine the extent of rebellion, which Sir Gordon thought small.¹⁷⁷ By July 27, 250 CMR had left Queenstown for Aliwal North.¹⁷⁸ From here they sped on to a Free State camp-ground.¹⁷⁹

Sir George Colley, who Frere had succeeded as High Commissioner, adversely criticized the colonial military undertaking by pointing out the inept discipline and poor preparation of the Cape military, the inevitability of a prolonged and difficult campaign, the vulnerable colonial lines of communication, and the disadvantage of fighting a mobile enemy who held fortifications in the remotest parts of Basutoland. Despite warnings, asserts De Kiewiet,

¹⁷⁵Pall Mall Gazette (London), October 8, 1880, p. 5.

¹⁷⁶Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 27.

¹⁷⁷R.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 304, ltr. Sprigg to Ayliffe, September 3, 1880.

¹⁷⁸Ibid., 198, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, July 27, 1880; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 27.

¹⁷⁹Theal, South Africa, XI, 60.

the Cape Government held too insignificant the military strength of the rebels, who had ample time to store cattle and food supplies in inaccessible country. To intimidate the rebels and protect the Loyalists, Cape Town dispatched very few soldiers instead of a large army, and there were too few skilled officers to handle the inexperienced troops, who had inadequate arms and ammunition.¹⁸⁰

Tylden contends that the warning of Wolseley (Supra, pp. 34-35, nn. 47-48), who had scanned intelligence reports, was extremely accurate but that Governor Frere did not allow this warning to alter arrangements, though both Frere and Sprigg realized how inadequate and unprepared were colonial troops for offensive warfare.¹⁸¹ Rebel chiefs noticed encouraging comments in newspapers.¹⁸² A majority of the colonial press said that the Cape Government should not have engaged the numerous and well-supplied Basutos with so few troops,¹⁸³ and the Pall Mall Gazette predicted that Basuto military success would excite other tribes.¹⁸⁴

Governor Frere, proceeding with his design to avoid confrontation but to support magistrates, with the full assent of Griffith moved a detachment of 50 CMR to Quthing, because Magistrate Austen had complained that the CMR already in Quthing were insufficient to patrol the district and chase off rebels and squatters.¹⁸⁵ Frere advised against sending troops to Maseru, because none were camped within several days marching distance, and news of a march would excite the rebels.¹⁸⁶ Kimberley approved of Sir Bartle refraining from action

¹⁸⁰ De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, pp. 267, 262-63.

¹⁸¹ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 139.

¹⁸² B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 221, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, August 7, 1880.

¹⁸³ The Times (London), September 2, 1880, p. 3.

¹⁸⁴ Pall Mall Gazette (London), July 23, 1880, p. 4.

¹⁸⁵ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 164, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, June 1, 1880; Ibid., 164, ltr. Sprigg, May 25, 1880.

which would increase tension and necessitate the use of more armed force.¹⁸⁷

Colonel Griffith, with that understanding, countered Letsie, who still shirked his duty. The paramount chief lied that neither had the rebels overpowered him nor had he officially received orders to fight them. He begged Griffith not to allow colonial troops into Basutoland because of the expense involved to the tribe¹⁸⁸ yet declared that old age prevented him from engaging in the civil war.¹⁸⁹ Cape troops, replied Griffith, would not intervene unless rebels overpowered the chief, or until Letsie asked assistance,¹⁹⁰ however, the Chief Magistrate said repeatedly that troops would deter rebel chiefs and their followers.¹⁹¹

The progress of colonial troops suddenly halted. Through his country President Brand allowed 300 CMR passage;¹⁹² the column marched to the west bank of the Caledon River and waited at Jackman Drift for Griffith to order it across.¹⁹³ Though Griffith rebuked Sprigg for intimating that magistracies would have to suffer assaults before the advent of troops, the Chief Magistrate refused to take responsibility for ordering troops across the Caledon River into Basutoland, despite the imminent rainy season threatening to make the Caledon River unfordable for months and thereby restricting the troops to Free State farms.¹⁹⁴

¹⁸⁶ Ibid., 186-87, ltr. Frere to Ministers, n.d., r. July 9, 1880.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 187, ltr. Kimberley to Frere, August 6, 1880.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 654, ltr. Letsie to Griffith, July 30, 1880.

¹⁸⁹ Brownlee, Basuto War, pp. 7-8.

¹⁹⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 293, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, August 4, 1880.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 300, ltr. Griffith to Ayliffe, August 10, 1880.

¹⁹² Ibid., 264-65, ltr. Brand to Frere, August 9, 1880.

¹⁹³ Ibid., 265, ltr. Sprigg, August 9, 1880.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid., 222, ltr. Griffith to Sprigg, August 8, 1880.

Threatened and unmistakable resistance came into focus as colonial troops neared the border. Barkly feared investment, because he had too few men to guard the border and his post, and now expected rebellion. Senile Chief Moletsane nursed a phobia that the colony would abuse him after disarmament¹⁹⁵ and, over eighty years old and a Christian, joined the rebels, saying that the whites had long wanted and had now begun to exterminate the tribe.¹⁹⁶ Rebel scouting parties roamed the Basuto countryside and stopped or watched closely magistracy messengers. Rebel earthworks at a drift in the Cornet Spruit blocked the route by which Colonel Frederick Carrington¹⁹⁷ was to relieve Magistrate Surmon from the Free State.¹⁹⁸ Rebel sympathizers, noted Surmon, barred the road from his post at Mohales Hoek to Quthing.¹⁹⁹ The rebels doubled their guards at all drifts as the CMR approached,²⁰⁰ and two regiments of Masupha, which observed the CMR at the Free State border, had orders to engage troops crossing the Caledon River.²⁰¹ Bad weather and poor roads had delayed the two relief columns under Colonels Bayly²⁰² and Carrington.²⁰³ Of the 650 CMR, Bayly

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 268, ltr. Barkly to Sprigg, August 12, 1880.

¹⁹⁶ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 272.

¹⁹⁷ S.A.D.N.B., p. 60. Colonel Carrington: Born in Cheltenham, England, Sir Frederick Carrington came to South Africa in 1875. He campaigned in Griqualand West, then against the Galekas in 1877, at which time he organized and commanded the Frontier Light Horse. As leader of the Transvaal Volunteers, he stormed the stronghold of the rebel chief Sekukuni. In the Basuto Rebellion, he commanded at Mafeteng and was seriously wounded. Carrington was principal commander in the Matabele Rebellion in 1896 and during the Second Anglo-Boer War led a Rhodesian force against the Transvaal from the north.

¹⁹⁸ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 268, ltr. Barkly to Sprigg, August 12, 1880.

¹⁹⁹ Ibid., 222, ltr. Surmon to Sprigg, August 8, 1880.

²⁰⁰ Ibid., 307, Cape Times, September 1, 1880; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 27.

²⁰¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 316, Interview between Sprigg and George Moshesh, August 30, 1880.

²⁰² S.A.D.N.B., pp. 21-22. Colonel Bayly: Colonel Zachary Bayly was born in England and came to South Africa, where he joined the Duke of Edinburgh's

commanded the left wing, and Carrington headed the right wing, which arrived at its destination in the Free State late in August. Henry Shervinton, renowned adventurer and mercenary, led a third detachment of soldiers from Kokstad to Basutoland by way of Umtata, as the direct route afforded no fodder or wagon road. At Palmietfontein, these troops sighted rebel pickets keeping vigil in rifle pits and behind stone walls lying along the opposite river bank.²⁰⁴

Natal officials at the same time acted resolutely. After the Basuto Civil War began, Natal colonists residing near the Drakensburg mountain passes feared assault by rebel raiding parties; accordingly, the Natal police mobilized under the command of Major J. G. Dartnell.²⁰⁵

Griffith, suggesting a final arrangement to avert engagement of troops, informed Letsie that colonial troops would garrison Maseru and Mafeteng to support the Loyalists. The magistrate would increase the number of native police patrolling the countryside, especially the border, to prevent intimidation. Rebels, continued the Chief Magistrate, must appear in the magistrate courts, submit to fines, and restore stolen stock and goods to whites and Loyalists. Though much would depend on Letsie forcing his tribe to disarm, the Cape Government would reconcile itself with the rebel surrender of only some guns and would allow Loyalists to keep arms for protection.²⁰⁶

Own Volunteer Rifles. In 1878, he commanded a detachment against the Korana tribe and the next year operated against Chief Morosi in the upper Orange River Valley. After a lengthy siege, he led the attack up Morosi's Mountain to terminate the campaign.

²⁰³ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 270, ltr. Frere to Kimberley, August 24, 1880.

²⁰⁴ Shervinton, The Shervintons, pp. 60-61; cf., B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 298, ltr. Sprigg to Frere, August 26, 1880.

²⁰⁵ H. P. Holt, The Mounted Police of Natal (London: John Murray, 1913), p. 91.

²⁰⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 320-21, ltr. Griffith to Letsie, September 5, 1880.

In fair judgement, the longer Governor Frere postponed enforcement of colonial laws, the more rebellious and prepared became the dissidents. Sprigg and Frere should have immediately dispatched troops across the frontier, and Sir Gordon too late showed his obliging intent towards Loyalists.

CHAPTER V

THE BASUTO REBELLION

SEPTEMBER 1880

In September, 1880, the Basuto Civil War, now three months old, became enmeshed in the Basuto Rebellion.¹ Basuto rebels legally were liable to prosecution by the Cape Government, as they had defied both the central authority as well as their own tribal hierarchy. Because of colonial intervention, at this time it is necessary to end discussion about the civil war, which nevertheless continued to perpetuate itself during the much more alarming Basuto Rebellion. No official record dated the exact beginning and end of the rebellion, but it is plausible to say that the war commenced on September 6, 1880, when colonial troops first crossed into Basutoland, and terminated during July, 1881, when both sides began to observe a military armistice. The rebellion did not require an earlier date, because the rebels did not commit overt

¹The material in the next few subchapters attempts to disprove some historical allegations, concerns the actual combat during the Basuto Rebellion, indicates the major battles (most of which have no names), and discusses the strategy, tactics, armament, logistics, and military appraisal of both sides. The campaign followed a course of action in which colonial troops with limited range battled highly mobile rebel forces. Tracing the events of this war, the text attempts to follow cohesively chronological progression in distinct geographical areas. In 1880, no adequate map of Basutoland existed; thus, the few attendant maps show, perhaps inaccurately, only some of the terrain in the campaign area. Historians have always referred to the war, informally, as the Gun War, thus perpetuating the fallacy that the PPA entirely caused the conflict. The colonial forces, history also recorded falsely, failed miserably to win victory. From careful scrutinization of the story, one must note that a multitude of events in and surrounding this conflict bring to mind events which occurred in the 1964-71 phase of the "Vietnam action."

violence against the Cape Town Government until troops entered Basutoland. The Basuto Civil War, amalgamating with the rebellion, recognizably began about June 1, 1880, and also terminated in July, 1881. The 1881 armistice ended neither the tribal feuding nor rebel resistance, although the fighting thereafter degenerated into the customary Basuto factious quarreling and did not involve colonial troops.

The most serious initial combat involved the Carrington wing of the CMR as it marched across the Caledon River towards Mafeteng to relieve Magistrate Barkly and his 200 Basuto police. About 2 miles from Mafeteng, 600 Basuto cavalry under Lerothodi attacked the advance guard commanded by Henry Shervinton, which warded off the hostiles until CMR reinforcements arrived. In their subsequent defeat, the rebels lost 12 killed, and the troops, who sold the captured enemy sheep and cattle for Government profit,² suffered only 1 casualty. Part of the Moletsane bataung³ attacked at Lithleko's village some Loyalists who had previously surrendered their guns.⁴ The CMR, after encamping at Mafeteng, fought Chief Moletsane at Lithleko's, killing 5 rebels.

Magistrate Barkly, in addition, actively participated in the initial confrontation. He with others rode out to scout around and informed a CMR scout that the hostiles blocked the road ahead. The magistrate met with and requested Lerothodi to go home and said that the CMR, unless attacked, would not molest the chief, but Lerothodi, insisting that he had sustained volleys, would not return home unless the CMR turned back. Barkly disclaimed responsibility for the CMR advance and warned Lerothodi of defeat if the chief attempt-

²Shervinton, The Shervintons, pp. 61-62; cf., Theal, South Africa, XI, 61.

³Bataung: clan.

⁴Theal, South Africa, XI, 61.

ted to halt the soldiers. The magistrate then ordered out the Basuto police as an advance guard with instructions not to fire first. The courageous police almost seized an entire rebel herd, but the enemy recouped most of the animals.⁵

Colonel Carrington, moreover, gave insight into the first few days of campaigning. Messengers from Lerothodi on the 13th advised him not to move into Basutoland, and during the colonial advance on Mafeteng, rebel cavalry shadowed the CMR flanks, front, and rear. Besides the 600 warriors with Lerothodi, 3,400 more hid in nearby hills. The Carrington troops by crossing a plain turned the flank of the rebel kopje⁶ on which stood Lerothodi and his warriors; then the CMR and police withstood a rebel onslaught and scattered it. The hostiles tried in vain to rally as they fled pursuit over 3 miles, a pursuit that initially sought to clear the road to Morija and Letsie.

The colonel, regarding further clashes, heard that rebels were attacking Loyalists nearby at Rafshotsberg. The CMR chased these hostiles 13 miles to the nek⁷ of Maquaisberg, killing 7. On the 14th, when a search-and-destroy patrol entered the village of Martineng, one and a half miles from Mafeteng, to prevent rebels escaping with grain, enemy resistance collapsed, and soldiers confiscated 2 loads of grain after destroying the village. On the 15th, while 25 CMR attacked the kraal of Matsepe, Lerothodi reinforced with 200 warriors the rebels defending a schantzen there, thus forcing the colonials to retreat. Captain Shervinton and Barkly with their reinforcements eventually dislodged all the hostiles and burned insurgent villages nearby. Lerothodi

⁵ R.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 347-49, ltr. Barkly to Griffith, September 13, 1880; cf., Theal, South Africa, XI, 61.

⁶ Kopje: a small hill, often covered by scrub, on the African veldt.

⁷ Nek: a low point in a mountain range often used as a travel route.

retained about 500 warriors at his fortified kraal; Moletsane resided close by with 800-900.⁸

On September 17, in a narrow escape for Shervinton in a following combat, 1,200 rebels battled 70 CMR, killing 3 of them.⁹ As Shervinton with 40 CMR were searching for enemy grain at an empty kraal 2 miles from Mafeteng, rebels suddenly poured from the village of Lerothodi to cut them off, and about 800 enemy cavalry surrounded the colonials in the kraal. Both Shervinton and the rebels received reinforcements, but 11 soldiers drove off the 800 hostiles to allow the Shervinton patrol to escape back to camp with no casualties. The rebels, who lost about 50 killed or wounded, fired indifferently, would not expose themselves to view, and always retreated when pressed.¹⁰ Later, Carrington himself joined in counter-attacking the rebel flank.

Rebel advantages became apparent in this latest encounter. Shervinton noticed that the Basuto ponies were superior to the CMR mounts and that the enemy carried Martini-Henry and Westley-Richards rifles, better weapons than the Snider carbines used by colonial troops. The rebels could fire from positions outside the range of Snider carbines, which were useless immediately after firing, and during this interval, reassured by the CMR indefensibility in close combat, could attack with assegais and battle axes. Prime Minister Sprigg, returning to Cape Town, witnessed this skirmish, and Shervinton told him of the mediocrity of colonial arms. Shervinton estimated at 40,000 the enemy forces, who at this time began to encircle and isolate Mafeteng, while only 13,000 colonials were being mobilized against them.¹¹

⁸ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 356-57, ltr. Carrington to Assist. Adj.-Gen., September 6, 1880; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 28.

⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 307, ltr. Clifford to Kimberley, September 20, 1880.

¹⁰ Ibid., 330, ltr. Clifford to Kimberley, September 20, 1880.

On the morning of the 21st, the date of the first attack on Mafeteng, Captain Shervinton attempted to use a heliograph¹² he had constructed about 1 mile from camp. Enemy cavalry attempted to capture colonial cattle and horses grazing near Shervinton, who barely escaped¹³ the 7,000 rebels advancing on Mafeteng. Meanwhile, 136 CMR, wagon drivers, European volunteers, Basuto police, and a few Loyalists manned strong points in the town. The enemy attacked Mafeteng on all sides and swept off cattle and half the native police mounts; then they charged the nearby village of Loyalist Mohapi, losing about 10 in this assault. Though colonial gunfire halted two more rebel charges, 200-300 enemy crept within 50 yards of the post¹⁴ and received 600-700 reinforcements.¹⁵ Shervinton with 25 men mounted up and dislodged from under a schantz 400 of these rebels,¹⁶ who fired once at the charge and fled.¹⁷ The tribesmen, indicates Barkly, used foot-long iron hooks with 2 sharp points to drag off their casualties,¹⁸ although Tylden says that for this purpose every warrior possessed a long rawhide rope with a grappling hook on the end.¹⁹ Numerous rebels on the 22nd returned home, but large units still occupied every hill around Mafeteng.²⁰

¹¹ Shervinton, The Shervintons, pp. 64-66; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 29.

¹² Heliograph: a device for signalling by means of a movable mirror, which flashes beams of light to a distance.

¹³ Shervinton, The Shervintons, pp. 66-67.

¹⁴ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 370-71, ltr. Carrington to Assist. Adj.-Gen., September 22, 1880.

¹⁵ Shervinton, The Shervintons, p. 67.

¹⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 371, ltr. Carrington to Assist. Adj.-Gen., September 22, 1880.

¹⁷ Shervinton, The Shervintons, p. 67.

¹⁸ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, p. 205.

¹⁹ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 151.

²⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 371, ltr. Carrington to Assist. Adj.-Gen., September 22, 1880.

The rebel chiefs, in this ignoble failure, refused to allow all their warriors to go home until Mafeteng fell. The insurgents had lost so heavily that they did not celebrate, as usual, after the battle, in which only 5 CMR had been wounded, and became disenchanted. Letsie had lost 1 son in the last assault.²¹ The hostiles showed magnificent cowardice at Mafeteng, according to Barkly, and the famed Battle Axes Regiment of Lerothodi suffered inglorious ignominy.

In the aftermath at Mafeteng, Magistrate Barkly boasted that his forces had killed about 100 rebels around the residency, and he placed wire and mines around his station.²² Captured horses supplied replacement mounts.²³ Lerothodi offered a £100 reward for the capture of Barkly.

Some warriors sent by impotent Letsie to protect Barkly instead joined the rebels.²⁴ The chief still proclaimed his loyalty and vowed that he would prevent from entering his ward the warriors of Lerothodi.²⁵

As colonial forces made progress without Letsie elsewhere, on September 6, the north column under Colonel Bayly crossed into Basutoland.²⁶ The force moved to Maseru without incident and planned to march on to Mafeteng if Griffith could raise enough volunteers to defend his post.²⁷ Bayly, with Commandant Schermbrucker as second in command, constructed an earthen fort and fortified

²¹ Ibid., 342, ltr. Sprigg to Treasurer-General, September 27, 1880.

²² Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, pp. 155, 164, 187, 204, 191, 206, 170.

²³ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 356, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, September 22, 1880.

²⁴ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, pp. 155, 191-92.

²⁵ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 347, ltr. Letsie to Griffith, September 14, 1880.

²⁶ Ibid., 327, ltr. Captain D. Hook to Ayliffe, September 17, 1880.

²⁷ Ibid., 331, ltr. Clarke to Undercolonial Secretary Herbert, September 23, 1880.

the buildings at Maseru.²⁸

To the north, meanwhile, Natal aided against insurgents. Rebels forced Loyalist Chief Jonathan from his stronghold at Tsikoane Plateau in Leribe District, and he took refuge with Magistrate Bell at Thlotsi Heights,²⁹ where a regiment of Loyalist volunteers guarded him.³⁰ Two hundred Natal Europeans engaged by Cape Town marched to help Jonathan, who actively sought armed support. Governor-General Colley of Natal permitted Cape Colony to raise a Natal native police force to serve Magistrate Bell.³¹ If rebels threatened Natal itself, Colley agreed to aid Cape Town by direct military intervention,³² a possibility which Aylward thought would delight the Cape Colony merchants and some politicians who thought that subjugation was the only method to bring black tribes into the "very questionable paradise that canteen-keepers and petty grocers call civilization."³³

To the south, at beleaguered Mhales Hoek, Magistrate Surmon with some whites and a few Loyalists defended his station against attacks and encirclement by rebels.³⁴ The garrison during a rebel attack on the 20th drove 1,200 enemy from the town and killed several chiefs.³⁵ On September 25, over 1,500 rebels attacked again but fled after suffering a few casualties.³⁶ They falsely rumored

²⁸ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 150.

²⁹ Thlotsi Heights: site of the Leribe magistracy and a military fort erected in 1879. Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, p. 294.

³⁰ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 521.

³¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 342, ltr. Sprigg to Treasurer-General, n.d., r. September 26, 1880.

³² Ibid., 308, ltr. Colley to Kimberley, September 26, 1880.

³³ Aylward, "Basuto," p. 340.

³⁴ Theal, South Africa, XI, 62.

³⁵ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, p. 195.

³⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 432, ltr. Surmon to Clarke, October 16, 1880.

that Surmon was now "food for the crows."³⁷

Troops, in subsequent colonial defensive positions, by the end of September garrisoned enclaves. Approximately 650 native policemen and colonial volunteers garrisoned Thlotsi Heights.³⁸ The north column under Colonel Bayly, 300 strong with some Basuto police, held Maseru; "Fighting Fred" Carrington secured Mafeteng with 250 soldiers and some Loyalists. Magistrate Surmon defended Mohales Hoek with 12 whites and 80 blacks, and Austen with 100 police and some loyal Baphutis and Tembus had fallen back from Ruting town to Masitisi.³⁹

Simultaneous rebellious outbreaks in Tembuland and Griqualand East threatened to strain both Cape Town forces and finances.⁴⁰ Magistrate Austen routed about 600 rebels under Chief Tyali, who had attacked the Palmietfontein magistracy in Herschel District,⁴¹ and Magistrate D. Hook at this post wanted 100 Bantu stationed 10 miles below the town to protect Loyalists fleeing Basutoland.⁴² Austen, after another skirmish with Tyali, promised that reinforcements could crush the insurgent Tembus.⁴³ Brownlee from Griqualand East reported that undesirables were exaggerating the Basuto Rebellion and that natives were demonstrating strong sympathy for the rebels.⁴⁴ He wanted more troops if the

³⁷ Ibid., 327, ltr. Hook to Ayliffe, September 17, 1880.

³⁸ Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 29.

³⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 344, Memorandum of September 29, 1880.

⁴⁰ Theal, South Africa, XI, 62; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 29; cf., B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 345, ltr. Clarke to Herbert, September 29, 1880.

⁴¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 334-35, ltr. Austen to Ayliffe, September 21, 1880; cf., Ibid., 335, ltr. Austen to Ayliffe, September 22, 1880.

⁴² Ibid., 332, ltr. Hook to Ayliffe, September 15, 1880; cf., Ibid., 333, ltr. Ayliffe to Hook, September 16, 1880.

⁴³ Ibid., 354-55, ltr. Austen to Ayliffe, September 29, 1880.

⁴⁴ Ibid., 322, ltr. Brownlee to Ayliffe, September 13, 1880.

situation there deteriorated,⁴⁵ because Cape Colony had transferred all soldiers from his district to Basutoland.⁴⁶

Problems arose in troop mobilization, for, while Cape ministers did not want to specify a definite period of service for the CMR but wanted Clarke to muster enough soldiers to keep 600 men in the field at all times,⁴⁷ General Clarke desired at least 2,000 permanent white troops, with 700 CMR from this total at Maseru and Mafeteng. Six hundred yeomanry and 700 volunteers would constitute the remainder of the force. From each regiment, Clarke wanted to activate only a limited number of men, who would remain in the field permanently, because, if he called out all the yeomanry at once, Boer burghers and other unreliable soldiers would have to replace them at the end of a six-month term.⁴⁸ Burghers constituted the only reserve force, though many officers raised additional white and Bantu units.⁴⁹ Burghers, believed the general, were militarily useless, because, untrained and reluctant to mobilize, they would hamper a field force,⁵⁰ and burgher anger at their mobilization, indicated Jan Hofmeyr, made the war unpopular in the rural areas, whose Boer inhabitants discussed ways to avoid military service.⁵¹ Clarke also complained of regiments mustering far below strength,⁵² and the Opposition in the Cape Parliament alleged that only

⁴⁵ Ibid., 327, ltr. Brownlee to Ayliffe, September 16, 1880; cf., Ibid., 336, ltr. Brownlee to Ayliffe, September 23, 1880.

⁴⁶ Brownlee, Basuto War, p. 9.

⁴⁷ B.S.P., (1881), 338, H. W. Pearson Minute, September 17, 1880.

⁴⁸ Ibid., 323, ltr. Clarke to Acting Undercolonial Secretary, September 15, 1880.

⁴⁹ Ibid., 345, ltr. Clarke to Herbert, September 29, 1880.

⁵⁰ Ibid., 353, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, September 17, 1880.

⁵¹ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 273.

⁵² B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 334, ltr. Clarke to Treasurer-General, September 21, 1880.

half the CMY mobilized because the other half existed only on paper.⁵³ The volunteer system worked badly, as it could not field men for more than 6 months.⁵⁴ General Clarke now decided to revisit Basutoland.⁵⁵

Administrator Clifford, disagreeing with mobilization procedures, was disappointed that Loyalists had not received immediate protection. He also regretted that military delays increased rebel armaments and numbers⁵⁶ and indicated that only a large army could prevent increased rebellion.⁵⁷ From experience in the Zulu War, he thought that all the CMR must serve for at least 6 months so that the Government could employ them strategically.⁵⁸

Shortly after this rebuke, in attempts to resolve the mobilization and Loyalist predicament, Clarke and Schermbrucker recruited and equipped Loyalists.⁵⁹ Sprigg, acknowledging that the rebellion had reached large dimensions,⁶⁰ activated 3 regiments of yeomanry for 3 months service⁶¹ and called for volunteers for 6 months service,⁶² because he believed that only a large and staunch white force could quash the rebellion in 3 months.⁶³ Sir Gordon, noting that the rebels perhaps numbered 5,000, wanted to proclaim specific areas for only Loya-

⁵³ Pall Mall Gazette (London), October 28, 1880, p. 5.

⁵⁴ Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 83.

⁵⁵ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 345, ltr. Clarke to Herbert, September 29, 1880.

⁵⁶ Ibid., 325, ltr. Clifford to Kimberley, September 20, 1880.

⁵⁷ Ibid., 324, ltr. Clifford to Ministers, September 17, 1880.

⁵⁸ Ibid., 338, ltr. Clifford to Ministers, September 18, 1880.

⁵⁹ Theal, South Africa, XI, 62.

⁶⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 336, ltr. Sprigg to Clifford, September 22, 1880.

⁶¹ Ibid., 339, ltr. Clarke to Treasurer-General.

⁶² Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 28.

⁶³ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 329, ltr. Sprigg to Ayliffe, September 20, 1880.

lists so that he could treat everyone outside these limits as rebels.⁶⁴

Despite the smoldering situation in the Transvaal, which alienated against each other British and Boer colonists,⁶⁵ Boers offered to help fight the rebels. One Transvaal veteran of the War of 1865 proffered his services as a guide and those of 200-300 other volunteers.⁶⁶ The Basuto Rebellion, he declared, had assumed proportions that the Cape Government neither expected nor could handle.⁶⁷ Though President Brand volunteered 30 men,⁶⁸ Free State farmers reluctantly loaned horses to carry ammunition to Mafeteng.⁶⁹

It seems appropriate to examine the logistics, organization, armaments, tactics, and strategy of the insurgents against whom the above mobilization was directed. General Clarke thought that the rebel mountain positions, unless blanketed by artillery fire, were too strong to succumb to attack and that Thaba Bosigo was the strongest point.⁷⁰ These impregnable mountain fortresses, according to Greswell, were barriers to colonial victory.⁷¹ The enemy had great difficulty in storing provisions, because they lacked a war treasury and commissariat. From their enormous numbers, nevertheless, they sent out 3 or 4 times as many men to turn back colonial columns numbering over 1,000 men that ventured out beyond enclaves.⁷² Not even a wagon could cross the Basuto border

⁶⁴ Ibid., 339-40, ltr. Sprigg to Clifford, September 17, 1880.

⁶⁵ Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 83-84.

⁶⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 349-50, ltr. P. E. Raaff to Owen Lanyon, September 20, 1880.

⁶⁷ Ibid., 350, ltr. Raaff to Frere, n.d., r. September 28, 1880.

⁶⁸ Ibid., 345, Troops in the field, September 25, 1880.

⁶⁹ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, p. 172.

⁷⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 323, ltr. Clarke to Acting Undercolonial Secretary, September 15, 1880.

⁷¹ Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 83.

⁷² Lagden, The Basutos, II, 522.

without a heavy escort, and rebel cavalry continuously watched camps and supply trains.⁷³ A military correspondent for The Times reported that the insurgents had no military organization, lacked discipline, and were negligently courageous.⁷⁴ Regardless of the actual outcome of the smallest combat, leaders always informed their warriors that they had battled victoriously.⁷⁵ The Basutos, however, could ingeniously entrench themselves and had evolved a distinct breed of small but strong horses adapted to mountainous country.⁷⁶ When the natives had only assegais, contends De Kiewiet, soldiers could pursue them, capture their cattle, and burn their grain. With rifles, the Basutos stood their ground.⁷⁷ The rebels, who were bad shots and hardly ever used gun sights, valued highly Westley-Richards rifles but still used assegais, deeply indented shields (Infra, p. 228, Pl. XII),⁷⁸ and a battle axe called the koakoa. A warrior could throw this battle axe (the shank of its blade was riveted through a two-foot carved handle) up to 30 feet when it was impossible to grapple with an opponent.

Regarding the abilities of Basuto military leaders, Lerothodi was a vulgar, uneducated drunkard. An astute politician, he had overcome all his enemies, and though an excellent rider, he used limited cavalry strategy. He succeeded in his primary aim to prevent colonial troops from occupying Morija, the village of his father and center for incitement of other tribes (also the

⁷³ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 149.

⁷⁴ The Times (London), October 18, 1880, p. 4.

⁷⁵ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 150.

⁷⁶ Theal, South Africa, IX, 81.

⁷⁷ De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p. 267.

⁷⁸ The Times (London), October 18, 1880, p. 4.

⁷⁹ George W. Stow, The Native Races of South Africa (Cape Town: C. Struik, 1964), p. 235.

headquarters of the PES). Lerothodi, who fought whenever and wherever he wanted, did not try to hold high ground in force but used a fluid defense which melted away from each colonial attack, only to counter-attack apparent weak spots. His force moved in a quasi-square formation around the colonials, shooting haphazardly and charging 2 or 3 times against selected points. Masupha during the war never personally led 1 attack, although he besieged Maseru. In the north, Chief Joel was anxious to fight, and his brother Jonathan, a good tactician and cavalry leader, was the next ablest commander after Lerothodi.

In regard to the competence and popularity of colonial leaders, General Clarke, according to Tylden, was a better administrator than a commander. Although an excellent leader in the Zulu War, and though his officers liked him, Clarke lost 2 chances at Mafeteng to seize the initiative from Lerothodi, and volunteers disliked the general. Carrington, next in command, had led the CMR against rebel natives since 1877 but had achieved no notable victories. The troops worshipped this resourceful and very active officer, and the Cape Colony press befriended him.⁸⁰ There was much discontent in military circles, however, at the appointment of Carrington to command his senior officer, Colonel Bayly.⁸¹ During the Basuto campaign, "Fighting Fred" never lacked initiative and even during the armistices urged patrols to goad the enemy.⁸² Colonel Bayly, who had much political influence, refused to serve under Carrington or cooperate with Clarke and unfortunately chained half the CMR at Maseru during the entire war.

In observation of colonial logistics, strategy, and organization, further-

⁸⁰ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 226-27, 229, 147, 149, 148.

⁸¹ Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 36.

⁸² Louis Cohen, Reminiscences of Kimberley. (London: Bennett & Co., 1911), p. 431.

more, there was a shortage of experienced officers and reserve troops, and, as the rebellions grew, colonial forces spread themselves over too large an area. So many troops garrisoned Leribe, Maseru, and Mafeteng that the main column at Mafeteng was never strong enough to capture Morija. At every stronghold, detachments formed a laager,⁸³ surrounded by a sod wall and a trench. CMR signallers in the Orange Free State prepared heliograph stations, and Clarke and Carrington used Wepener as a staging area to provision Mafeteng. Horses dragged artillery slowly over muddy roads,⁸⁴ and to ship victuals to the front was laborious, as the nearest railhead was at Queenstown, 200 miles from Basutoland.⁸⁵ De Kiewiet believes that colonial campaigning progressed slowly and that attacks on hills and rocky ground proved useless.⁸⁶

To the detriment of the troops, there was evidence of PES sympathy with and helplessness in the midst of rebels. The French whined of both their delicate position and of misrepresentation by both sides, yet the rebels seemed to enjoy chatting intimately with the missionaries. Neither did these flunkies sustain injury nor did their buildings suffer damage, but on the other hand, the Anglican missions sustained heavy destruction,⁸⁷ and the Wesleyan stations implored military intervention.⁸⁸ Insurgents fondly called Dr. Eugene Casalis "Letsie's Knife" for helping the rebel wounded, and the pastor insis-

⁸³ Laager: voortrakkers very successfully used this South African defense formation, which included a circle of wagons and thorn bushes. Rosenthal, ed., Encyclopedia, p. 285.

⁸⁴ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 149-50.

⁸⁵ Theal, South Africa, XI, 62.

⁸⁶ De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p. 267.

⁸⁷ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 248-49, 272.

⁸⁸ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 257 (1881), 1068, Sir Wilfrid Lawson speaking, January 20, 1881.

⁸⁹ S.A.D.N.B., p. 61. Eugene Casalis: Born in Segalis, France, Casalis

ted that the colony exaggerated enemy casualties. When Masupha cordially invited Mr. Duvoisin to examine his encampment in the Berea District, the missionary here expressed his views, but the natives only muttered in angry disagreement. The French were unable to prevent most of the Christians from joining the rebels, and at Morija, school children finished their exams and immediately embraced their guns and assegais. The schools closed, Christian congregations dispersed, and scores of loyal natives fled to the mountains. Adolphe Mabilles alleged that before he left Morija, he and local chiefs segregated the Loyalists in a refuge.⁹⁰

Governor Frere maintained that the struggle matched civilization against barbarism. Colonial troops perhaps might not end the rebellion, but the fighting so far had shown that ten years of peace had not dissipated Basuto courage or dulled tribal skill in surprising colonial forces.⁹¹ Though some, like Kimberley and Rhodes, opposed the war, the prospect of losing Basuto labor in their diamond fields, contended Frere, motivated these two men more⁹² than military necessity.⁹³ The Cape Argus wrote that the colony had involved itself in another costly and inglorious war,⁹⁴ and the Basutos, reported the Pall Mall Gazette, considered that the PPA was designed to instigate tribal rebellion. According to the Gazette, Frere, even if he did not directly cause

began Protestant mission training in Paris in 1830. Arriving at Cape Colony in 1833, he found no missionaries in Basutoland. Chief Moshesh allowed the PES to build at Thaba Bosigo a station, later relocated at Morija. Casalis returned to Paris in 1858 to become director of the mission for a time.

⁹⁰Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 272-74, 282.

⁹¹Frere, "The Basutos . . . Cape of Good Hope," p. 194.

⁹²Basil Williams, Cecil Rhodes (London: Constable and Co., Ltd., 1938), p. 63.

⁹³The Times (London), October 19, 1880, p. 8.

⁹⁴Ibid., October 1, 1880, p. 3.

the war, at least stirred bitter Basuto animosity, and supposedly, Prime Minister Sprigg thought the war would vitalize the patriotism and political independence of Cape Colony.⁹⁵ The paper insisted that, while Basuto magistrates had prepared for war, the rebels in the past had offered no resistance and now fought only defensively.⁹⁶

Prime Minister Sprigg, in conclusion, mistakenly believed that he could end the war swiftly; he and his ministers mobilized too few men to cope with the succession of sudden rebellions. General Clarke justifiably did not want set a definite term of service; thus, troops could not untimely leave the battlefield. In the Cape armed forces, deficiencies of manpower in mobilization and of other necessities, such as superior weaponry and swords, together with inefficient mobilization procedures, hampered the colonial effort. Little military cooperation between Cape Colony and Natal existed to meet contingent military situations. In order to damage rebel morale, troops should have attacked as early as possible Thaba Bosigo and Morija, respectively the military and administrative capitals of Basutoland. By October, opposition to the colonial military response could have resulted only from ulterior motives or from false information, as blatantly evidenced in the Pall Mall Gazette.

Chief Lerothodi, furthermore, sought to isolate his father from colonial influence. The hostiles, whose masses made dangerous long colonial pursuits, nevertheless did not employ their guns to the best advantage and lost every battle in September. In refutation of De Kiewiet, the rebels cowardly fled from Cape troops, and colonial attacks succeeded on difficult terrain. Rebels, in order to obtain allies and perpetuate aggression, fomented trouble

⁹⁵ Pall Mall Gazette (London), November 8, 1880, pp. 2, 4.

⁹⁶ Ibid., September 29, 1880, p. 4.

across their borders in Basuto clans and other tribes who thought it a good opportunity to rebel.

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On October 4, Colonel Southey evacuated Magistrate Surmon.⁹⁷ With the 2nd CMR of 184 men, Southey had marched to support another detachment at Olfant. Been in the Orange Free State, 8 miles from Mowales Hoek, where he took over command of 313 additional men. The rebels did not appear as these troops crossed the Orange River, but 1 mile further on, the enemy at long range fired at the main force; the colonials then charged the hostiles and drove them back. The troops, upon reaching Mowales Hoek, loaded most of the Surmon property and marched back within three-fourths of a mile of the river, where the 2nd CMY checked about 100 rebels attempting to occupy a village on high ground overlooking the road.⁹⁸ Only military necessity forced General Clarke to withdraw Surmon, who, with reinforcements, could have maintained his post.⁹⁹

Five thousand rebels under Masupha on October 10 attacked Maseru (Infra, p. 231, PLXVII), where Colonel Bayly commanded 239 whites and Schermbrucker led 256 blacks.¹⁰⁰ One hundred and thirty-eight whites, some police under George Moshesh, and some Loyalists defended the residency, and Chief Koadi with 154 warriors stood on a kopje between the residency and Trower's store. Sofonia, Nehemiah, Tsekelo, and Rampa manned the courthouse with their war-

⁹⁷ Theal, South Africa, XI, 62.

⁹⁸ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 398-99, ltr. Southey to Assist. Adj.-Gen., October 8, 1880.

⁹⁹ Ibid., 432, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, October 16, 1880.

¹⁰⁰ Theal, South Africa, XI, 62.

riors, and 46 men under Zitza Moshesh and Mokhitle occupied the hospital. Matheus with 35 natives and 13 whites held Trower's store; Philemoni with 18 warriors and 7 whites occupied Irvine's store. At dawn, a picket reported a force of rebels approaching from the south-southeast. The enemy occupied 3 kopjes in front of the residency, fashioned stone walls, and began shooting, while 3,000 others under Bereng, Mama, and Theko poured out from Lestatse's village. From Berea Plateau on the east, 2,000 more hostiles, commanded by Lepogo and Martins, 2 sons of Masupha, marched towards Maseru; 1 column approached the CMR camp, and the other started firing rapidly at the residency and Koadi's kopje. From the Caledon River, 500 more rebels approached from the direction of the residency toward the old jail, opposite to and separated from Trower's store by a creek, but Sofonia halted this onslaught. An enemy band from Lestatse's village, however, joined this rebel group, forcing Sofonia to retreat from the church to the courthouse. Koadi and 50 Loyalists, as ordered by Schermbrucker, started to take a ravine above the stream and to push the rebels towards the church or Trower's and the residency, but Lestatse's warriors menaced them, so Schermbrucker rescinded the order. Trower abandoned the knoll above his house as the main attack began, and, when the enemy assailed Koadi's kopje, the Loyalists there retreated after using up all their reserve ammunition. Hand-to-hand combat occurred at Trower's, and rebels charged within 20 yards of the residency fortifications, from where Busuto police recaptured a hill. Hostiles stole Trower's livestock from his kraal and burned the church, school, police barracks, stable, and several homes, but the Maseru garrison drove the rebels back.¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 426-28, ltr. Schermbrucker to Bayly, October 11, 1880.

In further examination, a 12 lbr. gun probably prevented the hostiles during the entire day from attacking in masses, though the colonial force retired to Fort Gordon.¹⁰² Colonel Bayly, imitating from Rorke's Drift,¹⁰³ burned the hospital buildings at dusk in order to illuminate the rebel positions.¹⁰⁴ While the enemy attempted to pull out the burning thatch on the hospital roof so that they could use the place for shelter, a shell hit them squarely.¹⁰⁵ Rebels attacked the Government House and feebly assaulted the fort, where the first volley from the defenders drove the assailants back. The hostiles burned the district surgeon's house, some offices, and part of the Trower store; then they plundered the courthouse and stole some guns.¹⁰⁶

Continuing, one defender reported that, as the enemy was firing heavily from behind the home of Griffith atop a kopje, he sent men into earthworks in front of the Irvine store. Then the rebels pinned down these men in a cross-fire from the police camp, forcing them to retreat to the store yard. At night, he regained the earthworks, killing about 40-60 rebels, built schantzen on each side, and fired on Trower's kopje after Trower had fallen back.¹⁰⁷

Mr. A. Sidwell, from another perspective, commanded the unit at Trower's store and at dawn had moved his men to Koadi's kopje and also held a small outpost which commanded the road from the Caledon. The enemy, exposing them-

¹⁰² Ibid., 380, ltr. Sprigg, October 13, 1880.

¹⁰³ Rorke's Drift: a battle during the Zulu War, in which a British detachment of engineers resolutely held off hordes of enemy warriors and thus prevented a Zulu invasion of Cape Colony.

¹⁰⁴ Pall Mall Gazette (London), October 14, 1880, p. 4.

¹⁰⁵ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 425-26, ltr. Bayly to Assist. Adj.-Gen., October 13, 1880.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., 380, ltr. Sprigg, October 13, 1880.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., 429, ltr. Hobson to Bailie, October 11, 1880.

selves by constantly changing positions, began shooting from a rocky hillside position about 700 yards away from the colonial lines; others sneaked down from the abandoned police camp and followed some sluits¹⁰⁸ to the east. Then 120 rebels dashed from the right front to the right flank, sustaining numerous volleys but capturing Trower's kraal, from which they fired at the outflanked and outnumbered colonials, who abandoned Koadi's kopje.¹⁰⁹ Before midnight, the rebels departed, leaving scores of dead, and Schermbrucker, who lost 2 killed,¹¹⁰ was confident that the troops could hold Maseru.¹¹¹

On October 25, rebels again unsuccessfully assaulted Maseru.¹¹² The enemy entrenched themselves on rocks, dongas,¹¹³ in the school ruins, and on the kloof¹¹⁴ to the left of Fort Gordon. Bayly sent out 20 CMR, 90 native troops, and some Loyalists¹¹⁵ who dislodged 400-500 hostiles on the rocky ledges of the Caledon river bank and killed 20,¹¹⁶ however, not before the rebels had killed 2 whites and 1 Loyalist and had run off 45 horses and 42 cattle.¹¹⁷

Near Mafeteng, in the meantime, the rebels, faring no better, assaulted the Fraser store at Diphering on the 4th. Carrington dispatched 50 CMR to the surrounding area to engage the enemy, and these troops with Barkly and his

¹⁰⁸ Sluits: deep ditches produced by heavy rains rushing through natural fissures.

¹⁰⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 429-30, ltr. A. Sidwell to Bayly, October 11, 1880.

¹¹⁰ Theal, South Africa, XI, 62-63.

¹¹¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 381, ltr. Schermbrucker, October 13, 1880.

¹¹² Ibid., 417-18, ltr. Bayly to Sprigg, October 26, 1880.

¹¹³ Dongas: narrow, steep-sided ravines made by water erosion but usually dry except in the rainy season.

¹¹⁴ Kloof: a ravine.

¹¹⁵ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 664-65, ltr. Bayly to Assist. Adj.-Gen., October 30, 1880.

¹¹⁶ Ibid., 418, ltr. Bayly to Sprigg, October 26, 1880.

native police, the Barkly Horse, fired on the rebels, who retreated. Lerothodi with about 200 warriors then raced to cut off Barkly and his police advancing on the Fraser store, but the magistrate pushed them back. The next day, 2,500-3,000 rebels fired constantly at the store as their ranks increased, and Shervinton and 25 men for defensive purposes occupied the kopje opposite Fraser's. Carrington and Barkly with 25 soldiers prevented Lerothodi from cutting off Shervinton, evacuated Fraser, and then withdrew.¹¹⁸

The rebels next in vain again sought to overrun Mafeteng. Mr. Bradshaw and 12 Basuto police, in a preventive measure, on the night of the 14th sneaked up a hill behind Hogsback Ridge and destroyed enemy schantzen. Other colonials mounted to charge 800-1,000 aroused rebels soon storming out of Masiu's hamlet but halted after they saw Lerothodi and his warriors on top of Hogsback Ridge. From Mohapi's village sprung 1,000 enemy warriors, and from a kloof behind Mafeteng struck another 500 rebels, who attacked colonial schantzen above the courthouse from Hogsback Ridge and below. The hostiles after hesitating charged colonial trenches but lost 4-5 killed and retired¹¹⁹ to burn a trading post as revenge for the Carrington victory.¹²⁰ Letsie secretly encouraged the rebels and blamed Lerothodi for suffering heavy losses at Mafeteng.¹²¹

The rebels, next reported Carrington, had moved toward the border to intercept General Clarke and the reinforcements which had assembled at

¹¹⁷Theal, South Africa, XI, 63.

¹¹⁸E.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 382-83, ltr. Carrington to Assist. Adj.-Gen., October 5, 1880.

¹¹⁹Ibid., 433-34, ltr. Carrington to Assist. Adj.-Gen., October 16, 1880.

¹²⁰Ibid., 381, Cape Times report, October 18, 1880.

¹²¹Ibid., 388, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, October 21, 1880.

Wepener.¹²² The force included the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd CMY, the Kimberley Horse, and two 7 lbr. guns.¹²³ Captain Hunt's Volunteers formed the rear guard, and the Grahamstown Volunteers (1st City Rifles), Port Elizabeth Volunteers (Prince Alfred's Guard [hereafter abbreviated to PAG]), and the Mhales Hoek contingent adjoined the left. The Cape Town Volunteers (Duke of Edinburgh's Own Volunteer Rifles [hereafter abbreviated to DEOVR]) stood on the right flank.¹²⁴ The troops included 101 officers, 1,495 whites, and 75 natives.¹²⁵

In the momentous battle of Kalabani that followed (Infra, p. 232, Pl. XVIII), the force crossed the border and left the road to avoid ambush, whereupon Lieutenant Cochran with two 7 lbs. placed on high ground dispersed massed rebels towards the north-northeast. The road then turned sharply to the right and entered a short pass between Robatwani's village and Kalabani Hill, which the CMR had occupied, and the wagons passed through single file and afterward resumed formation. Clarke sent Colonel Brabant with the 1st CMY to probe eastward, where a rebel array charged the unit, and hand-to-hand fighting erupted.¹²⁶ Captain Dalgety dismounted his 120 men within 300 yards of a few of these enemy and advanced firing. One thousand hidden rebels charged him and 2 following CMY troops, and before the yeomanry could remount, 300 rebels led by Chief Seiso sprung in among them, killing 36, mostly with assegais and battle axes. Carrington with part of his garrison sallied out

¹²² Ibid., 385, ltr. Sprigg, October 19, 1880.

¹²³ Shervinton, The Shervintons, p. 70.

¹²⁴ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, p. 244; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 30.

¹²⁵ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 386, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, October 19, 1880.

¹²⁶ Ibid., 435, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, October 20, 1880; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 30.

and scattered some of these rebels,¹²⁷ and Captain Nettleton rallied the convoy and with the Dalgety unit helped drive back the enemy. The 2nd CMY under Colonel Southey then reinforced the crippled 1st Regiment, and together they attacked a small village and killed about 40 fleeing rebels. The 3rd CMY next joined the engagement.¹²⁸ As the enemy appeared on both flanks, artillery repelled their left. From the right, of 7,000-8,000 massed hostiles charged 300-400, but several volleys from the DEOVR stopped them. For 3 hours, the PAG and 1st City Rifles fought off hostiles on the left. Nguebe Letsie and his brother Bereng then led an unsuccessful charge against the 1st CMY.

Clarke, in the wake of Kalabani, said that swords were invaluable to all mounted troops, asserted that his force was insufficient,¹²⁹ and wanted Martini-Henry rifles for his soldiers.¹³⁰ Mrs. Barkly urged both Sprigg and Frere to rapidly reinforce the troops, who always seemed numerically inadequate for their undertakings.¹³¹ The Pall Mall Gazette alleged that 100 soldiers had been incapacitated at Kalabani and that Clarke had exaggerated the body count of 300 rebel warriors.¹³² Tylden adduces that the colonial forces were not accustomed to such casualties and that additional setbacks would lead to further parliamentary opposition to the war. The "victory" of Lerothodi at Kalabani, concludes Tylden, balanced his failure to take Mafeteng.

¹²⁷ Shervinton, The Shervintons, pp. 70-71; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, pp. 30, 32.

¹²⁸ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 435, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, October 20, 1880; cf., Ibid., 386-88, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, October 19, 1880; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 30.

¹²⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 386-88, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, October 19, 1880; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 32.

¹³⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 436, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, October 20, 1880.

¹³¹ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, pp. 227, 232.

¹³² Pall Mall Gazette (London), October 21, 1880; p. 4; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 32.

Clarke, following his usual strategy, left Carrington with a force inadequate to hold Mafeteng, kept open lines of communication with Wepener, and assaulted the hordes of Lerothodi.¹³³ He built a fort close to the Mafeteng laager to house the garrison whenever his column returned to the border for supplies,¹³⁴ but only after sufficient reinforcements arrived did Clarke decide to bolster the garrison.¹³⁵

The general, in his next move, though the rebels foiled a surprise attack, decided to capture the village of Lerothodi atop a hill 3 miles from Mafeteng (*Infra*, p.230 , Pl.XV).¹³⁶ On October 22, about 1,000 colonials engaged 6,000-8,000 rebels, and enemy prisoners later confirmed a body count of about 600 dead from their force, which 5 sons of Letsie commanded.¹³⁷ Colonial troops climbed the foothills, burned a number of native huts, occupied a plateau and village east of the Lerothodi hamlet, and, notwithstanding the fire from thousands of enemy cavalry below, dragged their artillery up to the plateau. On the colonial right, numerous hostiles by occupying a rocky gorge precluded a colonial assault on the main village, and they also occupied an adjacent donga, an obstacle that required clearing. The CMR dismounted and with the DEOVR under Shervinton charged towards the right to seize the rebel donga.¹³⁸ A correspondent present at the battle thought it a miracle that a large number of soldiers were not killed in this charge, however, the onset

¹³³ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 156.

¹³⁴ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 388, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, October 21, 1880.

¹³⁵ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, pp. 232, 235.

¹³⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 389-90, ltr. Clarke, October 22, 1880; cf., Ibid., 662-63, ltr. Major J. M. Grant to Assist. Adj.-Gen., November 1, 1880; cf., Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, pp. 239-40; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, pp. 32-33.

¹³⁷ Shervinton, The Shervintons, pp. 71-72.

¹³⁸ Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, pp. 34-35.

came swiftly. When the DEOVR seemed a bit hesitant, Shervinton cast off his jacket, rolled up his shirt sleeves, drew his sword, and raced ahead. The troops followed so fast that they jumped into the donga atop the rebels, and 1 exhilarated soldier pursued and killed some of the panic-stricken rebel horde. Shervinton with 200 infantry then attacked about 1,000 rebels, killed over 100, and captured numerous enemy horses and 200 rifles, which the hostiles fired clumsily.¹³⁹ The PAG, in the first bayonet charge by a South African volunteer unit, drove the enemy in another sector back over a ridge in hand-to-hand combat, killing many here and more in the upper gorge who were fleeing to Krantzes¹⁴⁰ and Lerothodi's village.¹⁴¹ The escaping enemy offered excellent targets for artillery. A direct colonial assault then captured the village, killing about 31 more rebels.¹⁴² Thirty-one troopers were killed in the battle.¹⁴³ To hold the village of Lerothodi was impossible, because the hostiles occupied hills on the right and left; thus, the colonials initiated an orderly withdrawal.¹⁴⁴ Barkly issued a Government proclamation which offered protection to rebels who surrendered guns and ammunition.¹⁴⁵ Several warriors of Moletsane after the battle fled to the Orange Free State to seek work.

General Clarke, in maneuvers after this battle, dispatched a search-and-destroy patrol to Maquaisberg (Moletsane's Mountain), where Moletsane suppos-

¹³⁹ Shervinton, The Shervintons, pp. 72-73; Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, pp. 240-41.

¹⁴⁰ Krantzes: sheer cliffs.

¹⁴¹ Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 34.

¹⁴² B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 390, ltr. Clarke, October 22, 1880; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 34.

¹⁴³ Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 34.

¹⁴⁴ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 663, ltr. Grant to Assist. Adj.-Gen., November 1, 1880.

¹⁴⁵ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, p. 252.

edly hovered, and the unit saw few rebels and burned a village.¹⁴⁶ On October 30, General Clarke with 1,450 men left Mafeteng to storm Maquaisberg again.¹⁴⁷ Nguebe, Mogela, and Zeko, all sons of Letsie, helped lead the opposing rebel force,¹⁴⁸ estimated at about 5,000.¹⁴⁹ As the enemy grew too numerous, the colonials retreated from the Moletsane hamlet with 8 dead.¹⁵⁰ Moletsane, nevertheless, afterwards hastened to Thaba Bosigo, and most of his men, short of ammunition, fled to the Maluti Mountains.¹⁵¹ During this battle, Shervinton remained on duty for 19 consecutive hours. The rebels, he said, were very active and fought every time the troops marched out, whereas the colonial forces did little except make 7-day sorties to contact the hostiles.¹⁵²

Magistrate Bell, to the north in Leribe District, where the Molappo brothers were campaigning energetically, reported that Chief Jonathan had occupied a strong post at Thaba Patswa after driving away the warriors of Masupha who had fortified it.¹⁵³ Near the end of the month, an attack by Chief Joel on Thlotsi Heights miscarried, but he successfully stole cattle from Griffith going to the Free State. The Government, thought Bell, must offer a reward for the capture of Joel.¹⁵⁴

The rebellions outside Basutoland, meanwhile, had assumed alarming proportions, but colonial troops greatly diminished the threats. Magistrate

¹⁴⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 417, Summary of events in Basutoland since October 26, 27, and 28, 1880; Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, pp. 252-53.

¹⁴⁷ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 419, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, October 31, 1880.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 661-62, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, November 1, 1880.

¹⁴⁹ New York Times, November 7, 1880, p. 2.

¹⁵⁰ Theal, South Africa, XI, 63.

¹⁵¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 418, ltr. Clarke, October 28, 1880.

¹⁵² Shervinton, The Shervintons, p. 74.

¹⁵³ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 384, ltr. Sprigg, October 19, 1880.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 450, Summary of events in Basutoland since November 2, 1880.

Austen in Quthing District was concerned about Basuto rebels in the lower part of his district and the rebellion of Tyali,¹⁵⁵ but troops soon flushed the demoralized rebel Tembus from lower Quthing into mountainous country.¹⁵⁶ Cape Town asked the factious Pondos to help vanquish the Basuto rebels. The neighboring Pondo Chief Umhlonhlo, thought Magistrate Hope at Qumbu, was unreliable,¹⁵⁷ and, as expected, the chief joined the instigating Basuto rebels.¹⁵⁸ After Umhlonhlo cowardly killed Magistrate Hope, colonial troops defeated the rebel Pondos,¹⁵⁹ and Clarke believed that Natal regular troops could check the entire Pondo tribe.¹⁶⁰ The most pernicious insurgent influence penetrated Griqualand East District,¹⁶¹ where, on October 5, the Basutos around Matatiele rebelled. Colonial forces faced 5,000 hostiles here and in Tembuland, and a rebel victory could increase the enemy ranks in these places to 10,000.¹⁶² The rebel Basutos here had voiced no grievances but savagely slaughtered native neighbors¹⁶³ and almost murdered Chief Magistrate Brownlee for warning them against rebellion. The Natal Government and Natal traders delivered arms and

¹⁵⁵ Ibid., 389, ltr. Austen to Ayliffe, October 18, 1880.

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., 385, ltr. Sprigg, October 19, 1880.

¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 362, ltr. Hope to Ayliffe; cf., Ibid., 672, ltr. Davis to Ayliffe, October 29, 1880; cf., Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 153.

¹⁵⁸ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 365, ltr. George C. Strahan to Kimberley, October 29, 1880.

¹⁵⁹ J. Henderson Soga, The Southeastern Bantu (Johannesburg: Witwatersrand University Press, 1930), pp. 345-47.

¹⁶⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 352, ltr. Clarke to Treasurer-General, October 1, 1880.

¹⁶¹ Ibid., 323, ltr. Strahan to Kimberley, October 6, 1880; cf., Ibid., 352, ltr. Brownlee to Ayliffe, n.d., r. October 1, 1880.

¹⁶² Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 152, 157; These Basutos were an overflow into Griqualand East from Basutoland and were not part of the unified Basuto tribe, Soga, The Southeastern Bantu, p. 346.

¹⁶³ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 404-05, ltr. Brownlee to Ayliffe, October 12, 1880.

ammunition to Brownlee,¹⁶⁴ and Administrator George C. Strahan announced that troops by the 19th had checked the Griqualand rebels.¹⁶⁵

On the other side of Basutoland during this month, Cape Colony and the Orange Free State antagonized each other despite their good intentions. Strahan desired friendly relations with the Free State, and he asked Brand to halt the contraband trade,¹⁶⁶ whereupon the president replied that Free State law punished severely persons who sold ammunition and guns to natives, and he instructed the field cornets and other officials to strictly enforce the law.¹⁶⁷ From Free State territory, Basuto hostiles captured 190 of Trower's cattle;¹⁶⁸ at the end of the month, numerous rebels crossed into the Orange Free State at Jackman Drift, an act which facilitated their attacks in Basutoland.¹⁶⁹ Boers, said rebel prisoners, offered them military intelligence¹⁷⁰ and with renegade Englishmen sold them horses, guns, blankets, and liquor. On the positive side, President Brand refused Lerothodi permission to attack the troop camp at Wepener, where the Bloemfontein Mission had erected a camp hospital for the colonial wounded,¹⁷¹ and allowed 300 additional colonial troops to pass through his country, wanting to know only by which corridor the contingents would travel so that he could inform the landdrosts¹⁷² of the route.¹⁷³ Strahan,

¹⁶⁴ Brownlee, Basuto War, pp. 10-13, 26.

¹⁶⁵ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 379, ltr. Strahan to Kimberley, October 19, 1880.

¹⁶⁶ Ibid., 354, ltr. Strahan to Kimberley, October 4, 1880.

¹⁶⁷ Ibid., 375, ltr. Brand to Strahan, n.d., r. October 7, 1880.

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 380, Cape Times report, October 12, 1880.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 664, ltr. Bayly to Assist. Adj.-Gen., October 30, 1880.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 388, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, October 21, 1880.

¹⁷¹ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, pp. 231-32, 236.

¹⁷² Landdrosts: Boer magistrates who served rural areas until the British administration began.

¹⁷³ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 693, ltr. Brand to Strahan, October 25, 1880.

however, did not inform Brand of the troop itinerary through the Free State.¹⁷⁴

As troops from the other Boer state, the Transvaal, volunteered for the war, President Brand rejected the proposal of a Transvaaler to raise Free State volunteers, because such action would endanger the border area and compel the country to mobilize a large army.¹⁷⁵ The British administrator at Pretoria volunteered loot-hungry Transvaal officers and other personnel for the campaign.¹⁷⁶ Clarke recommended acceptance of these 300 Ferreira volunteers on the same terms as those issued by the Imperial Government during the Zulu War, because, at this time, he did not want to mobilize more regular units,¹⁷⁷ but Strahan, lying that Clarke deemed the proposal unnecessary, rejected the Ferreira offer.¹⁷⁸ Cape Colony, however, later accepted Transvaal volunteers on the same terms as with Natal.¹⁷⁹

As Natal, meanwhile, offered more aid, Major Dartnell mobilized 100 mounted natives from tribes along the border to watch the passes and upper borderland, and another 120 natives left to combat the rebels. Governor Colley conferred with a dejected Brownlee and reinforced the Cape Colony post of Fort Harrison at St. John's, because it was more accessible from Natal.¹⁸⁰

Strahan, in further mobilization, called up 2,000 burghers¹⁸¹ and purchased some second-hand swords from the Free State.¹⁸² To Griqualand East, Sprigg

¹⁷⁴ Ibid., 692, ltr. Strahan to Kimberley, November 23, 1880.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., 694, ltr. Brand to Strahan, October 29, 1880.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 390-91, ltr. Administrator at Pretoria to Strahan, October 23, 1880.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 362-63, ltr. Clarke to Sprigg, October 4, 1880.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 374, ltr. Strahan to Administrator at Pretoria, October 9, 1880.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 366, ltr. Kimberley to Strahan, November 4, 1880.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 420-21, ltr. Colley to Kimberley, October 30, 1880.

¹⁸¹ Ibid., 391, Strahan proclamation, October 23, 1880.

¹⁸² Ibid., 694, ltr. Brand to Strahan, October 27, 1880.

dispatched 900 reinforcements.¹⁸³ The recruiting of volunteers was unsuccessful, because employers would not assuredly rehire most men mobilized in volunteer units; therefore, some volunteers sent in drunken substitutes for military duty. Cape Town wanted to field a large force to quickly stifle the rebellion.¹⁸⁴

In newspaper criticism of the combatants and their advocates, Reuters falsely reported the devastation of Maseru and the danger of annihilation for colonial troops besieged in enclaves, and the Pall Mall Gazette announced that the troops were losing the war. Much responsibility for the war, maintained the Daily Telegraph (London), resided with people and newspapers who advocated the rebel cause. This paper questioned how far the guardians of the insurgents could reconcile their interests with conduct that led to the massacre of Loyalists and their allies and to the destruction of Loyalist hamlets. All South Africa held these instigators and Opposition agitators in the Cape Parliament responsible for inciting the natives to resist European domination and for starting rebellions that threatened the South African colonies.¹⁸⁵

In reflection, few troops often drove off numerous rebels, and the useful artillery seemed indispensable. Colonial bravery, notably that of Sher-vinton, unfortunately did not alter the imbalanced manpower ratio between the combatants, which precluded some colonial military action. Active Loyalists adequately demonstrated their bravery in October. Because of his anger at Cape Town handling of the crisis, the once active and much needed Colonel

¹⁸³ Ibid., 393-94, ltr. Sprigg, October 26, 1880.

¹⁸⁴ The Times (London), October 19, 1880, p. 4.

¹⁸⁵ Pall Mall Gazette (London), October 14, 1880, pp. 2-4; Prominent Cape politicians smuggled armaments to the rebels, Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 146.

Griffith now brooded in silence.

The rebels, moreover, continued to lose heavily in reckless attacks and in defense postures, and rebel morale must have suffered, because some hostiles quit the war. It was unconscionable that rebel sympathizers and others both instigated and heartened the hostiles, exaggerated enemy successes, and underestimated colonial accomplishments.

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Despite rumors from still undaunted rebels that they had killed all the troops at Mafeteng, colonial forays from this post encountered repeated success.¹⁸⁶ Carrington sallied out on the 10th on a search-and-destroy mission with 69 officers, 1,251 regulars, and three 7 lbr. guns. The troops moved on Hermon, then to Tsakholo Lake, where advance units scattered about 150 rebels from some villages, and soldiers burned these hamlets on the 12th.¹⁸⁷ Clarke ordered Carrington to march through open country to Kolo Mountain to encourage a battle, because there were not enough troops to search the mountains.¹⁸⁸ Sloshing over muddy terrain, soldiers found that the moisture made their Snider ammunition jam. Troops on this march did not hold ground taken and always returned at night to their laager near Tsitsa's Nek on the road from Mafeteng to Kolo. The enemy, as the colonials approached closely one day, pushed out a black bull on high ground as a signal for a mounted charge on 3 sides of the

¹⁸⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 450, Summary of events in Basutoland since November 2, 1880.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., 706, ltr. Carrington to Clarke, November 16, 1880.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid., 667, Summary of events in Basutoland since November 11, 1880.

colonial square.¹⁸⁹ Carrington, thinking the hostiles hidden nearby in strength after initial skirmishes, had barely positioned some of his units when 2,000 hostiles assaulted the colonial right, 800 the left, and 300-400 toward the front. The enemy charged fiercely, and only intense colonial rifle fire kept them from overrunning the rear guard. Artillery fire killed a dozen rebels and would have dispatched more if the enemy had not come so close to the colonial ranks and if enemy shelter had been farther away. Their onslaught collapsed, and the hostiles retreated. Of 5,000 attacking rebels,¹⁹⁰ over 600¹⁹¹ died along with 3 colonials,¹⁹² but the rebels could absorb such casualties and kept Carrington permanently dependent on his laager.¹⁹³ The colonel moved east again to taunt the rebels into exposing themselves and then returned to Mafeteng.¹⁹⁴

Magistrate Barkly, furthermore, burned 1 or 2 rebel villages near Mafeteng with Carrington,¹⁹⁵ who conducted search-and-destroy operations against several more rebel villages. Massed at Kolo, 10,000 hostile warriors had altered their plan to massacre a Wepener convoy and attack Mafeteng, because Carrington had already defeated them and now occupied Hermon in order to see

¹⁸⁹ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 159-60; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 36.

¹⁹⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 706-07, ltr. Carrington to Clarke, November 16, 1880; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 36.

¹⁹¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 700, Summary of events in Basutoland since November 16, 1880.

¹⁹² Ibid., 707, ltr. Carrington to Clarke, November 16, 1880.

¹⁹³ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 160; Theal and Orpen relate that the colonial assault on Kolo Mountain failed, Theal, South Africa, XI, 63; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 36.

¹⁹⁴ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 668-69, Summary of events in Basutoland since November 10, 1880.

¹⁹⁵ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, p. 249.

cort the supply train. On November 16, because rebels again occupied and had fortified Lerothodi's village,¹⁹⁶ a search-and-destroy patrol marched out under Carrington on the 21st, and troops captured the hamlet and drove off the rebels. Because the more numerous enemy continued to fire on them rapidly, however, the colonials soon fell back.¹⁹⁷ On the 22nd, Colonel Brabant with 600 men and 2 guns sallied out from Mafeteng to contact the hostiles, shelled 5,000 who fled, and a few days later repelled 800 rebels who attacked his camp.

Continuing, Colonel Carrington moved out on the 28th with 1,200 men on a search-and-destroy operation.¹⁹⁸ Following skirmishing all of that day at Boleka Ridge, a rebel night attack on Carrington failed. On the 30th, a 600-man column set out and engaged victoriously in several skirmishes with the trailing enemy. Later, at Tsitsa's Nek, the soldiers successfully battled the hostiles, and a colonial detachment assaulted a nearby nek to destroy enemy villages. The rebels during these actions refused to charge or fight in the open and fired their ample ammunition at too long a range.

The troops, despite these successes, advanced no further because of insufficient numbers to hold the ground. Colonel Carrington wanted 600 men to escort supplies from the Free State, 400 to garrison Mafeteng, additional troops to form a mobile column, and at least 700 soldiers to maintain communications between the column and Mafeteng.¹⁹⁹

In Leribe District, moreover, the colonial position became tenuous.

¹⁹⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 700-01, Summary of events in Basutoland since November 16, 1880; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, pp. 36-37.

¹⁹⁷ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, pp. 254-56.

¹⁹⁸ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 710-11, Summary of events since November 23, 1880, Basutoland; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 37.

¹⁹⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 718, Summary of events since November 30, Basutoland; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 37.

Chief Joel attacked the Leribe magistracy with 600 warriors on the 8th, burned the police barracks, and stole 30 horses and all the Loyalist cattle, but troops repelled the assault and killed 17. Members of Jonathan's clan fought only reluctantly.²⁰⁰ Enemy numbers increased under Chiefs Joel, Khetise, Kalsua, Lesuana, and Masupha until over 2,000 surrounded the residency.²⁰¹ Magistrate Bell, having predicted his encirclement, asked for the Kimberley Horse, the Ferreira unit, and 2 howitzers²⁰² in addition to the loyal Griqua West contingent already in the district.²⁰³ Chief Jonathan retired to fortified Thaba Patswa, because his clan would not actively support him. After Joel, Ramarella, and another rebel chief later drove Jonathan from Tsikoane Mountain and confiscated his cattle,²⁰⁴ the Loyalist with 260 stragglers fled to Thlotsi Heights, where Loyalists there and Chieftainess Senate's clan nearby pledged support, though scores left the post to protect their families who resided elsewhere. On the 12th, the enemy again made a futile attack on the residency, aiming miserably, struck on all sides on the 14th and burned some houses, and the following day fired from schantzen at long range.

As reinforcement of Thlotsi Heights promoted more active maneuvering, 180 Kimberley Horse force-marched there from Maseru and cut through enemy lines. Part of this unit and a garrison detail under Bell later forced the hostiles from entrenchments and flattened rebel schantzen. Chief Joel on the 20th lost numerous men in an attack from Bell,²⁰⁵ and the next day the Kimberley

²⁰⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 668, Summary of events in Basutoland since November 10, 1880.

²⁰¹ Ibid., 710, Summary of events since November 23, 1880, Basutoland.

²⁰² Ibid., 668, Summary of events in Basutoland since November 10, 1880.

²⁰³ Ibid., 695, ltr. Strahan to Brand, November 8, 1880.

²⁰⁴ Ibid., 668, Summary of events in Basutoland since November 10, 1880.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 710-11, Summary of events since November 23, 1880, Basutoland.

Horse in another clash killed 30 more rebels.²⁰⁶ While Masupha, enraged that the Kimberley Horse had safely reached Thlotsi Heights, sent warriors to the Caledon Drift to stop further colonial reinforcements, a CMR unit on the 27th arrived at Ficksburg in the Orange Free State, where Bell requested it to await an escort by Captain Ferreira.²⁰⁷ Ferreira had reached Thlotsi Heights on the 25th, after his Transvaal Horse, the escorting Kimberley Horse, and Loyalists under Jonathan had driven back a 3-sided rebel attack.²⁰⁸

Colonial success in neighboring Griqualand East withstood native unreliability. Brownlee, because he suspected that half his 100 enlisted Basutos were rebels, abandoned Matatiele. Loyal Basutos here continued to join the hostiles because of threats and confiscation of Loyalist property, and numerous Griquas were questionable Loyalists.²⁰⁹ The defeat of Chief Umhlonhlo, besides other colonial military pressure, however, precluded the opportunity for rebel success in Griqualand East and quieted adjacent Bantu tribes.²¹⁰

President Brand, on the opposite Basuto border, further evidenced his friendly neutrality towards Cape Colony, despite friction over troop passage. He wrote that "irregularities" forced him to advise sending the Kimberley Horse to Maseru instead of to Leribe, because he feared another rebel incursion if the Kimberley Horse traveled on his side of the Caledon River.²¹¹ Two weeks before, a detachment of the Kimberley Native Contingent, followed by

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 701, Summary of events reported since November 16, Basutoland.

²⁰⁷ Ibid., 711, Summary of events since November 23, 1880, Basutoland.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 718, Summary of events since November 30, Basutoland.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 367, ltr. Brownlee to Ayliffe; cf., Ibid., 447, Summary of events . . . Kaffraria since November 2, 1880.

²¹⁰ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 157-59; cf., Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 84.

²¹¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 695, ltr. Brand to Strahan, November 9, 1880.

rebels, and without Free State sanction, had escorted arms and ammunition from Maseru to Thaba N'chu.²¹² Administrator Strahan was unable to remedy this error²¹³ but apologized for the transgression of this Griqua West unit and asked Brand to permit passage for the Kimberley Horse to Leribe, as otherwise, Magistrate Bell and Chief Jonathan would be endangered.²¹⁴ Colonel Griffith ordered the Kimberley Horse to march through, regardless of circumstances.²¹⁵ President Brand, unapprized of the Griffith command, allowed 200 Kimberley Horse passage from Maseru to Leribe, provided the landdrost of Ladybrand sanctioned the route of march and the contingent avoided this town and Ficksburg, and advised the detachment to pass through Madderpoort and to inform farmers in advance where it proposed to camp.²¹⁶ Masupha asked Brand for permission to purchase ammunition in the Free State.²¹⁷ Because aiding the rebels violated Free State law, the president refused this request and replied that he could not correspond with Masupha except through Colonel Griffith, to whom he forwarded the Masupha letter and its reply.²¹⁸

By November 1, from additional mobilization to the rear, troops at the front numbered 673 infantry, 1,828 cavalry, and 1,585 natives.²¹⁹ Strahan, nevertheless, admitted that the rebels were winning.²²⁰ Magistrate Barkly for himself requested additional soldiers and a large native contingent.²²¹ The

²¹² Ibid., 696, ltr. Brand to Strahan, November 10, 1880.

²¹³ Ibid., 696, ltr. Strahan to Brand, November 11, 1880.

²¹⁴ Ibid., 696, ltr. Strahan to Brand, November 9, 1880.

²¹⁵ Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 93.

²¹⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 696, ltr. Brand to Strahan, November 12, 1880.

²¹⁷ Ibid., 748, ltr. Masupha to Brand, November 23, 1880.

²¹⁸ Ibid., 748, ltr. Brand to Masupha, December 9, 1880.

²¹⁹ Ibid., 440-41, Troops in the field . . . , November 1, 1880.

²²⁰ New York Times, December 13, 1880, p. 3.

Opposition in the Cape Parliament derided the volunteer forces and scorned the burghers for allowing Governor Frere to mobilize them;²²² the tyrannical colonial methods used to procure soldiers for the war, added the Pall Mall Gazette, caused discontent.²²³

In appraisal of the November campaigning, colonial troops to their advantage systematically destroyed rebel supplies and shelter, and Cape Colony finally mobilized a considerable number of men. Faulty military reconnaissance, however, allowed rebels to mass secretly and charge without warning. The enemy reoccupied destroyed but nevertheless strategic positions like the village of Lerothodi, because Cape troops could never secure these places. Basutoland Loyalists, it seemed, could fight effectively only with colonial support. It was impossible, however, to conceive how Strahan surmised that the rebels were winning, because they neither had won battles so far nor otherwise had severely worsted colonial troops. The Opposition in the Cape Parliament flirted with sedition by execrating the mobilization.

According to the Second Treaty of Aliwal North (1869), moreover, President Brand acted correctly in his dealings with Masupha. The president had every right to curtail or restrict to specific routes colonial troop movements, because his countrymen were vulnerable to rebel harm, from which the British Government noticeably did not protect the Free State as provided for in the Aliwal treaty.

²²¹ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, p. 258.

²²² Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 91.

²²³ Pall Mall Gazette (London), November 19, 1880, p. 2.

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As rebel masses continued to founder during colonial forays, on December 1, 600 troops and 1 gun left Mafeteng on a search-and-destroy mission south-east towards Thaba T'soen. The troops clashed with 1,500 rebels at the top of a kopje, killed 4-5 in a skirmish there, chased the rest away, and held the hill even though surrounded by hostiles. Another rebel horde from the Kolo direction charged at the rear of the colonial camp, but a howitzer scattered the onslaught. Carrington then withdrew with 2 killed, because his outnumbered troops were unable to take more enemy positions.²²⁴

Continuing, after Carrington shifted his camp to near the strategic Tsitsa's village on the 5th, about 8,000 rebels under the command of Mama, Bereng, Seiso, Ramoroko, Lerothodi, Tsien, Masupha, and other chiefs appeared in a line from Tangesberg to Tsitsa's Nek in front of the 410-man column. A colonial detachment carried Tsitsa's Nek and after dark swept up a steep and strongly-schanized hill in back of Tsitsa's hamlet. At dawn, Carrington directed a frontal attack, and the soldiers soon cleared the fortified village, burned it, and killed a few fleeing rebels.

On December 4, Barkly, counseling on future strategy, arrived back at Mafeteng from Wepener with reinforcements of 830 burghers and 100 men of the 2nd CMY.²²⁵ He advised the evacuation of troops from Leribe and Maseru and the concentration of all forces at Mafeteng, because there were too few soldiers. In a month or two, the necessary destruction of rebel crops would require nu-

²²⁴ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 719-20, ltr. Tennant, Assist. Staff Officer, Mafeteng, Sprigg, December 1, 1880; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 37.

²²⁵ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 719, Summary of events reported since November 30, 1880; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, pp. 37-38.

merous soldiers, as the harvest of enemy fields would provide 2 years of food supplies, and, as without the yield, the hostiles would starve in 6 months. The enemy strongholds, felt the magistrate, were too strong to allow capture at this time.²²⁶

Colonel Carrington on the 6th, in further action, related that 830 burghers encamped at Dumas Lake had panicked and stampeded their mounts, allowing the rebels to catch about 50 horses. Colonel Brabant, on a search-and-destroy mission with 400 regulars and 300 burghers, passed Azariel Nek on December 8 and later destroyed some enemy villages and crops at Tsakholo Lake, where he clashed momentarily with a hostile force. The next day, a 300-man burgher contingent patrolling near the border burned some rebel hamlets²²⁷ and skirmished with hostiles. On the 10th, about 8 miles from Mafeteng, Barkly fought with rebels at a nek all day. Of the 1,200 soldiers with him, 400 always guarded his camp. As the magistrate continued on patrol, 8,000 hostiles moved silently in front of him.²²⁸

The Battle of Tangesberg on the 13th offered an example of the success of colonial formations. The advancing infantry formed a square, ready to march towards a ridge of low hills occupied by the rebels until artillery drove them off. The Loyalists, followed by the CMR, mounted and charged the enemy head on;²²⁹ at this point, 200 burghers disobeyed orders to join the charge. As Carrington and 485 infantry neared one hill, more than 5,000 rebels began stalking the rear and both flanks of the troops; therefore, the

²²⁶ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, pp. 256-57.

²²⁷ B.S.P., (1981), LXVI, 732-33, Summary of events from Basutoland since December 7, 1880.

²²⁸ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, p. 221.

²²⁹ Cohen, Reminiscences of Kimberley, p. 433; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 38.

hollow square with the horses in the middle fought its way through the enemy for 1,500 yards. The square then turned to a rise on the right near Tsitsa's Nek, where the CMR, PAG, and part of the DEOVR in the front rushed up the slope in formation, killing several warriors and scattering the enemy in all directions.²³⁰ The hostiles never got closer than 150 yards to the square, and the chiefs with difficulty induced their men to charge into the withering fire. At the end of the battle, Carrington ordered the CMR, PAG, and DEOVR back from the hill and requested Colonel Brabant to abandon Azariel village and assist him.

Brabant, meanwhile, in contraction of the victory, had received orders to pass through Azariel Nek with 645 troops to near Pokwane Mountain in order to destroy the laagers of Mama and Bereng while Carrington passed by this mountain to draw the hostiles towards Boleka Ridge. Brabant subsequently was able to occupy only an insignificant hamlet 4 miles distant from the Tangesberg battlefield, and 2,000 hostiles prevented his aiding Carrington, who then ordered the Azariel force back to its camp. The rebels, nevertheless, at Tangesberg and Azariel suffered heavy losses, and their sporadic gunfire killed only 2 colonials.

On December 12, in Government activity to the north, Chief Jonathan evacuated his family to the Free State, and Magistrate Bell enlisted 400 warriors of the chief in a native contingent.²³² Colonial military operations in Leribe District, indicates Tylden, had little effect on the course of the war.²³³

²³⁰ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 745, ltr. Tennant to Sprigg, December 13, 1880; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, pp. 38-39.

²³¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 751-53, ltr. Carrington to Assist. Adj.-Gen., December 17, 1880; cf., Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, pp. 38-39.

²³² B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 744, Summary of events in Basutoland since December 14, 1880.

At this point in the hostilities, remote Chief Letsie and other chiefs with a large neutral body of warriors congregated at Matsieng, where Letsie promised to surrender himself if the colonials approached. Led by Lerothodi, Mama, Bereng, Ramoroko, Moletsane, and others, a hostile force of about 8,000, however, held the heights blocking the road to Morija and Matsieng.²³⁴

As effectual armaments for their adversaries arrived by the end of the month, Martini-Henry rifles reached the CMR and CMY, and the majority of the cavalry now carried revolvers. Most of the CMY possessed swords; another shipment for the CMR was due from England.

The CMR and its promoted new commander, in addition, received commendation. The CMR, wrote Carrington, was becoming a more proficient fighting force. The rebels nicknamed Shervinton the "scatterer of armies," and General Clarke said that this hero, who later became adjutant to Carrington, had distinguished himself several times in Zululand.

In reflection on the adverse conduct of the CMR, scores of them deserted from Mafeteng, as the garrison was near the Free State border. Rebels killed numbers of deserters and took prisoner others. The fact that the CMR was the only unit at the front which had to pay for its own food and shelter motivated desertions;²³⁵ discontent also may have arisen from other reasons, such as boredom.²³⁶ One man wrote The Times that his brother serving at Mafeteng had no revolver or sword, only a Snider carbine, and could not purchase a revolver on credit. The writer contended that the Government profited from the sale

²³³ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 161.

²³⁴ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 744, Summary of events in Basutoland since December 14, 1880.

²³⁵ Shervinton, The Shervintons, pp. 75-78; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 40.

²³⁶ Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 40.

of arms to its troops.²³⁷ Some of the CMR sneaked away because of indebtedness, and, as no extradition treaty existed with the Orange Free State, some of them ran away by way of Bloemfontein.

In this period preceding the Transvaal outbreak of 1881, discontented burghers in the Cape North District were hostile to the Cape troops of British extraction. Mobilized Boer burghers had segregated themselves at Kalabani into a separate contingent, of which numbers were generously paid substitutes for wealthy farmers.²³⁸ These soldiers were tired of the war and wanted to return home; they envisioned neither sudden victory nor an advantage in losing more men and money in order to vanquish the Basutos.²³⁹

Natal, more cooperative than these burghers, initiated limited counteraction against the rebel threat. Officials thought that one rebel Basuto incursion against a native village was retribution for a Natal native expedition against the rebels in October, because the hostiles wreaked the worst vengeance on these natives.²⁴⁰ Major Dartnell feared repetitive rebel incursions from a rugged area between two ranges of the Drakensberg along the Natal border. Though Governor Colley dreaded that one enemy success might encourage more attacks and promised to guard the border in troubled sectors, he refused to allow Dartnell to make a punitive raid into eastern Leribe, as this act might draw Natal wholly into the war.²⁴¹ Rebels later ambushed and massacred some Natal native scouts, but as the police approached, the raiders fled and did not cross the frontier again.²⁴²

²³⁷The Times (London), January 6, 1881, p. 6.

²³⁸Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 160-61.

²³⁹Theal, South Africa, XI, 64.

²⁴⁰B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 747, ltr. Dartnell to Sprigg, December 5, 1880.

²⁴¹Ibid., 580, ltr. Colley to Kimberley, December 13, 1880.

Examining colonial military efforts, by the end of the year, Cape Colony had fielded 7,485 cavalry, 1,350 infantry, 9,320 Bantu, and 348 Hottentots against the rebels. These troops had pacified only a small area outside the magistracies and troop camps and had not permanently occupied the numerous rebel strongholds,²⁴³ and successful punitive patrols, maintains Orpen, had failed to bring victory.²⁴⁴ Administrator Strahan, ordered by London to remain in the background and not interfere with Sprigg,²⁴⁵ advised that, so far, the colony had not at all diminished the rebellion.²⁴⁶

In impartial judgement, colonial formations proved effective in defensive and offensive postures. Contrary to Theal, troops did capture for a time some secondary fortified rebel strongholds; notwithstanding Tylden, colonial victories in Leribe must have affected rebel military posture, and, in opposition to Strahan statements, rebellion had been lessened if for no other reason than by heavy enemy losses in manpower and sustenance. So many soldiers guarding supplies at encampments, however, subtracted from the number available for offensive forays. For burghers to resent Cape troops was natural, as British soldiers garrisoned the Transvaal, though disobedience from burghers endangered fellow soldiers.

²⁴² Holt, The Mounted Police of Natal, p. 96.

²⁴³ Theal, South Africa, XI, 64.

²⁴⁴ Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 38.

²⁴⁵ New York Times, December 13, 1880, p. 3.

²⁴⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 721, ltr. Strahan to Kimberley, December 7, 1880.

JANUARY 1881

Continued colonial victories, such as the hotly contested Battle of Twee-fontein near Mafeteng on January 7, did not daunt Lerbthodi. Here, the left side of the colonial camp hurled back an initial enemy charge, after which hostile reinforcements massed near Tsitsa's hill. Hundreds of hostiles charged the colonial lines through an artillery barrage, fell back in the face of the shellfire, and fired from long range. Colonial artillery and rifle fire later blunted a third enemy charge on the right.²⁴⁷ Some CMY cut through rebel lines and returned. Rebel cavalry, on the other hand, disoriented 400 burghers and stunted another CMY charge, and his cavalry, believed Lerothodi, with battle axes still could fight colonial infantry successfully.²⁴⁸ Troops subsequently pursued the hostiles to Pokwane Ridge.²⁴⁹

On January 10, there was a large skirmish near Mafeteng in which Shervinton displayed heroism. A search-and-destroy column of 850 regulars and 350 burghers under Brabant marched towards Lerothodi's village. A burgher charge dislodged some harassing hostiles from a ridge. Near the Lerothodi hamlet, hostiles isolated and massacred a small number of 1st City Rifles, then cut out their hearts and gleefully devoured them. Opposite Thaba T'soen, a large group of rebels fired from behind a steep ledge. Brabant, failing to drive off the enemy with artillery and rifle fire, and noticing more Basutos nearby, decided to storm the ledge. After other fruitless colonial attempts, Shervinton with reinforcements sneaked up undetected towards the enemy and charged straight onto the krantz ledge so quickly that the hostiles had no

²⁴⁷ Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 40.

²⁴⁸ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 162-63.

²⁴⁹ Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 40.

time to mount up; multitudes leaped over the escarpment to escape, and the rest savagely defended themselves to the death. The colonial Martini-Henry rifles impressed the enemy, who lost 60 killed in the charge.

Warriors of Lerothodi, furthermore, once more foundered despite penetrating the colonial ranks. After Shervinton on the 14th marched out of Pokwane camp with 960 men towards Thaba T'soen, an advance guard of burghers and native troops charged a kopje from which the rebels had fired on them. As the troops reached the crest, 2,000 hostile cavalry appeared; the advance guard raced back with 3,000-4,000 rebel cavalry close behind. A squad of CMR in a dismounted column turned aside part of the enemy charge. The Native Contingent attempted to stand with the 400 burghers, but the latter scampered off and allowed the rebels to charge into the native ranks and with assegais and battle axes to kill 26 natives and Commandant Erasmus during his attempt to rally his Boer troops. The enemy, their thrust finally blunted, raced to the left and right and on the colonial right again charged the column, which turned and shattered them. Some CMR, the 3rd CMY, the PAG, and part of the DEOVR for almost a mile advanced dismounted in a line to rout the rebels in the fiercest fight that Shervinton had ever witnessed. If the burghers had closed ranks, the hostiles would have suffered more severely. The regular troops lost 16 killed,²⁵⁰ the burghers lost 22, and the hostile force of 5,000 suffered 80 killed.²⁵¹

One rebel, in the aftermath of the battle, surrendered at Mafeteng and said that his comrades were tired of the war and short of food and ammunition. Soundly defeated Lerothodi, he continued, had executed several warriors who

²⁵⁰ Shervinton, The Shervintons, pp. 78-82; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, pp. 41-43.

²⁵¹ Theal, South Africa, XI, 65; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 43.

had refused to fight further and also had caused disenchantment by butchering cattle belonging to followers for sustenance.²⁵²

On January 6, in enemy failure further north, a large rebel force surrounded the magistracy at Thlotsi Heights and struck on all sides, but the prepared defenses withstood the persistent attackers, who withdrew after killing 2 Loyalists.²⁵³

Mixed fortunes, meanwhile, confronted colonial troops adjacent to Basutoland. As Magistrate Austen marched up the Orange River with 300 Fingos, the rebels repelled them on January 28 on Mokochemel Plateau south of Morosi's Mountain, killing Austen and 8 others. In the wake of this action, Chief Letsie accepted cattle stolen from Austen, and genuine fear of invasion swept Cape Colony.²⁵⁴ On the 3rd, reported Chief Magistrate Brownlee, rebel Basutos attacked Matatiele unsuccessfully, and troops pursued the retreating hostiles.²⁵⁵ Colonial forces at the end of January stalked 600 fleeing rebel Basutos and Baphutis over Ongeluk's Nek into the mountains south of the Orange River.²⁵⁶

During January, burghers and others for various reasons deranged the mobilization, and colonial forces dwindled in size. The Government Gazette on January 12 listed 76 men, both yeomen and burghers, as absent without leave, and Cape Town, to meet manpower needs, enlisted some convicts.²⁵⁷ One group of burghers deserted from Maseru soon after arriving, others assigned

²⁵² Pall Mall Gazette (London), February 15, 1881, p. 8.

²⁵³ Theal, South Africa, XI, 65.

²⁵⁴ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 163-65; cf., Theal, South Africa, XI, 67.

²⁵⁵ G.S.P., (1882), XLVII: "Affairs of Basutoland and the Territories to the Eastward of the Cape Colony," 179, ltr. Owen, Acting Military Secretary, January 11, 1881.

²⁵⁶ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 164.

²⁵⁷ Theal, South Africa, XI, 65.

to relieve the Transvaal Horse at Leribe quit before arrival at the post,²⁵⁸ and burghers from Swellendam left the front because of a colonial non-looting policy and personal desire not to fight for an English ministry at Cape Town.²⁵⁹ One burgher unit which had fought excellently on January 10 complained of a false accusation of flight that day and threatened to declare its enlistment time expired and return home. Discipline was difficult to enforce, as regulations forbade flogging and execution; thus, only 300 of the original 1,000 burghers remained at the front.²⁶⁰ Although Undersecretary Duff in the British House of Commons announced that no information pointed to discontent in the Transvaal as motivation for the flight,²⁶¹ the Pall Mall Gazette condemned the burgher withdrawal as sympathy evinced for the Transvaal Boers.²⁶² The burghers, adds De Kiewiet, thought that they had not received a fair share of confiscated rebel grain and cattle.²⁶³ Theal says that the burghers questioned the PPA, suffered by neglecting their regular employment, and in early February left the war zone 500 strong with the sanction of their comrades, thus convincing the rebels of governmental inability to suppress the rebellion.²⁶⁴ Brookes contends that all the pleading of Theal does not excuse the numerous burghers who acted cowardly and unpatriotic by absconding.²⁶⁵ One hundred and eighty-seven burghers who deserted from the Mafeteng force received six-month

²⁵⁸ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 163-64.

²⁵⁹ Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 92-93.

²⁶⁰ Shervinton, The Shervintons, p. 82.

²⁶¹ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 257 (1881), 1034, Mr. Duff speaking, January 20, 1881.

²⁶² Pall Mall Gazette (London), January 19, 1881, p. 4.

²⁶³ De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p. 267.

²⁶⁴ Theal, South Africa, XI, 67-68.

²⁶⁵ Brookes, History of Native Policy, p. 104.

prison sentences.²⁶⁶ Among the English-speaking troops, furthermore, the DEOVR complained about its extended tour of duty without replacement as provided by law. The PAG term of service having expired, most from this unit returned home.²⁶⁷

Lerothodi, his brothers, Joel, and the chiefs following them, presenting another obstacle by still hawking pre-war nonsense, delivered a peace petition to Cape Town. Since 1868, wrote the supplicants, they had tried to be good British subjects and now promised their loyalty, future good behavior, and defense of the Crown, and wanted the intercession of the Queen. Sprigg allegedly had broken promises concerning the Quthing matter, the timing of disarmament, and a strong Basuto constabulary. Now, fields lay desolate, homes lay ruined, and women and children starved in the mountains.²⁶⁸ Letsie, who refused to sign the petition even though he still wanted British intercession, asked Strahan for advice and insisted that his sons and brothers had been unprepared for and had not wanted a war.²⁶⁹ Sir Hercules Robinson,²⁷⁰ the new Cape Governor, receiving the rebel document which beseeched him to intercede for them and to relate their grievances to the Queen, found that the hos-

²⁶⁶ Pall Mall Gazette (London), February 23, 1881, p. 6.

²⁶⁷ Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, pp. 36, 43.

²⁶⁸ B.S.P., (1881), LXVII: "The Affairs of Basutoland," 595-96, Petition to Strahan, January 10, 1881.

²⁶⁹ Ibid., 594, ltr. Letsie to Strahan, January 10, 1881.

²⁷⁰ S.A.D.N.B., pp. 317-18. Sir Hercules Robinson: A cadet at Sandhurst, Robinson was commissioned a lieutenant in 1844 but left the army two years later to enter the colonial service. He was Governor of Hong Kong from 1859-65, of Ceylon from 1865-72, and of New South Wales from 1872-80. In 1880, he became Governor of Cape Colony and High Commissioner of South Africa, and he again held these posts in 1895. Though he disapproved of the Jameson Raid, Robinson secured the release of its leader, after which he received the title of Lord Rosmead. Dictionary of National Biography (London: 1903), Vol. I, p. 1117. Robinson was also President of Montserrat in 1854, Lieutenant-Governor of St. Christopher in 1855, and negotiated the annexation of the Fiji Islands in 1874.

titles had restated old arguments and, wanting to retain their guns, claimed inability to fight the colony.²⁷¹

Robinson, in the setting for peace conditions, reported that his ministers, while they doubted the integrity of the rebels and wanted a guarantee for peace before an armistice, had agreed to deliver the rebel petition to the Queen. The governor affirmed the disloyalty of the rebels, who, if sincere now, would surrender their guns and submit to the Cape Government. Robinson, with the assent of Sprigg and his cabinet, promised the hostiles generous terms within the law,²⁷² and Kimberley agreed to this offer with minor alterations.²⁷³ Most of the enemy leaders, believes Theal, wanted peace and were willing to accept moderate terms but not disarmament.²⁷⁴

Good colonial strategy, in circumspection, concentrated rebel forces by driving them into the Basutoland area, but Cape Colony fears of invasion signified that rebels still might take the initiative and that colonists doubted that their troops could protect the frontier. The English-speaking troops and the burghers, who were accustomed to fight for spoils, had some legitimate grievances.

Their antagonists, the rebels, who merely flirted with peace, desired for British intervention to bypass Cape Town authority and would not pay the consequences for rebellion. Governor Robinson should not have offered lenient terms to the rebels, because such action compromised the Loyalists.

²⁷¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVII, 593, ltr. Governor Sir Hercules Robinson to Kimberley, January 30, 1881.

²⁷² Ibid., 593, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, February 2, 1881; Ibid., 603, ltr. Sprigg, March 1, 1881.

²⁷³ Ibid., 594, ltr. Kimberley to Robinson, February 3, 1881.

²⁷⁴ Theal, South Africa, XI, 65-66.

FEBRUARY 1881

Rebel obstinacy did not stop colonial persistence. Although colonial forces, reported Magistrate Barkly, seemed to make little headway against the rebels,²⁷⁵ General Clarke with 4,000 fresh troops was marching towards the front. On February 3, Carrington with a search-and-destroy column of 650 men marched to Pokwane Mountain and sighted 8,000 rebels, who refused to fight.²⁷⁶ Colonel Bayly two days later inflicted severe losses on a large rebel force near Maseru,²⁷⁷ and Carrington, with Shervinton in the lead, on February 13 captured Boleka Ridge, a key point in a lengthy enemy defense line. After some of the DEOVR, whose term of service had expired, had refused to march, CMY replaced the obstinate. A colonial charge then surprised the sleeping enemy, who fled without fighting.²⁷⁸

In the Battle of Ramadikwe on the 16th, furthermore, the enemy fervor counted for naught. Brabant, in order to reconnoiter a new camp location on the road to Morija, made a reconnaissance maneuver towards Boleka Ridge with 570 men. Spotting the rebels, Shervinton dismounted the CMR and marched them ahead of the main column up a ridge in a hollow square with the horses in the center. As the entire column assembled in a square, about 300 rebel cavalry ferociously attacked the front of the square, 300 under Lerothodi the left, and 1,200-1,500 the right, but the CMR and CMY dispersed those on the front and right, and the infantry on the left scattered others. The enemy attack advanced so furiously that some rebels became skewered on bayonets like ka-

²⁷⁵ Barkly, Among Boers and Basutos, p. 260.

²⁷⁶ Pall Mall Gazette (London), February 8, 1881, p. 7.

²⁷⁷ Ibid., February 11, 1881, p. 6.

²⁷⁸ Urpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, pp. 43-44.

bobs;²⁷⁹ thus, some of the 30 hostiles killed in the attack kept their promise made before the battle that they would die among the green-jackets, referring to the PAG uniforms of green with red trim. The colonial howitzer demoralized the rebels and forced them to abandon villages below Tangesberg to which they had fled.²⁸⁰

The Carrington column, on the march towards Morija, in another tactical success captured on the 16th a fortified rebel position one and a half miles long²⁸¹ by surprising the enemy and thereby gained a base 6 miles ahead of the previously occupied laager.²⁸² The troops, having killed 100 hostiles,²⁸³ then destroyed nearby rebel crops.²⁸⁴

The clash of Transvaal Boers with Imperial troops in the First Boer War affected the Basuto conflict, as the success of the Boers encouraged the rebels.²⁸⁵ Whereas Cape Colony considered prohibiting shipments of arms and ammunition through Free State territory to prevent their theft for use by the Vaal Boers,²⁸⁶ President Brand probably would disallow further passage for colonial troops through his territory to the Basuto war zone if the Orange Free State allied with the rebellious Transvaal.²⁸⁷

The rebels, though still fighting, replied to the Robinson offer of me-

²⁷⁹ Shervinton, The Shervintons, pp. 83-84; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, pp. 44-45.

²⁸⁰ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 165; Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 45.

²⁸¹ Pall Mall Gazette (London), February 18, 1881, p. 6.

²⁸² Ibid., February 21, 1881, p. 4.

²⁸³ The Times (London), March 29, 1881, p. 5; cf., Pall Mall Gazette (London), February 22, 1881, p. 7.

²⁸⁴ Pall Mall Gazette (London), February 22, 1881, p. 7.

²⁸⁵ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 146.

²⁸⁶ Pall Mall Gazette (London), February 23, 1881, p. 6.

diation; therefore, Colonel Griffith, as ordered, proclaimed an armistice from February 18 through February 24.²⁸⁸ Thanking Sir Hercules for his generous terms, Lerothodi, Joel, Masupha, and Ramanella placed themselves under his direction but pleaded confusion over their proposed disarmament and submission to the Government. Though professing trust in Cape Town and hoping for an end to the war and a concrete peace, they fretted about land confiscation and deposition of chiefs, feared harsher terms should enforcement of the PPA continue, and asked to see immediately specific conditions to be afforded them after disarmament.²⁸⁹

Prime Minister Sprigg, in reaction to the enemy response, said that, before his further discussion of proposals, the rebels would have to unilaterally submit to the Cape Government.²⁹⁰ Governor Robinson, still recommending leniency, also deemed the belated reply unsatisfactory, as the hostiles allegedly wanted peace but refused to submit to the law until they learned specific peace conditions.²⁹¹

The Cape ministers, despite dissatisfaction with the rebel attitude, announced their eight conditions for peace. The terms were as follows: 1) Rebel submission to colonial Government and law, 2) immediate surrender of all arms, 3) amnesty awarded all except Masupha, Lerothodi, and Joel, who would stand trial but not risk execution, 4) payment of a fine, 5) no confiscation of Basutoland proper except appropriation of land for new residencies, 6) resolution of the Quthing question by the Cape Parliament, and 7) acceptance or re-

²⁸⁷ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 167.

²⁸⁸ B.S.P., (1881), LXVII, 600, ltr. Griffith to Robinson, February 15, 1881.

²⁸⁹ Ibid., 600-01, ltr. Lerothodi and Joel to Robinson, February 19, 1881.

²⁹⁰ Ibid., 607, ltr. Sprigg to Robinson, February 21, 1881.

²⁹¹ Ibid., 597, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, February 23, 1881.

jection of these conditions within twenty-four hours after receipt by Lerothodi. Cape officials planned no further negotiations, and if the rebels did not accept the terms, hostilities would resume at the end of the armistice. Finally, 8) if fighting did recur, the existent offer would be subject to change.²⁹²

Colonel Griffith, who indicated his views of and efforts in these proceedings, attempted to induce the rebels to accept the Robinson peace conditions, but the hostiles were too loyal to their chiefs to act independently.²⁹³ To allow Lerothodi time to answer the eight conditions, Griffith extended the armistice from the 24th to the 26th, but the rebels, who welcomed the extension of the armistice, gave no reply.²⁹⁴ The Chief Magistrate vowed to protect Letsie, who apologized for the Lerothodi pretense of ignorance, if the chief demonstrated his loyalty by coming to Maseru.²⁹⁵ The Robinson terms were much too lenient, thought Colonel Griffith, and he believed that the colony must punish the rebels before dispensing generous treatment, because the hostiles were barbarians, regarded as a sign of weakness the mild terms which a civilized government offered them, and thus acted accordingly. The Chief Magistrate prepared to enforce the PPA with vigorous military action,²⁹⁶ having reported that the rebels, who disclaimed defeat and would not disarm, believed the colony desperate for peace.

Governor Robinson, indicating the delicate position of his ministers and

²⁹² *Ibid.*, 597-98, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, February 23, 1881.

²⁹³ *Ibid.*, 608, Summary of events in Basutoland since March 1, 1881.

²⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, 599, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, March 2, 1881.

²⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, 610, ltr. Letsie to Griffith, February 26, 1881; *Ibid.*, 610, ltr. Griffith to Letsie, February 28, 1881.

²⁹⁶ Smith, *The Mabilles of Basutoland*, p. 289.

himself, had offered his services only after consulting his ministers and Kimberley and then had thought it best to act as only an arbitrator, because overt influence from his office might embarrass and anger his ministers, the Cape Parliament, and the entire colony. The sole reply of Lerothodi relieved Robinson of unconstitutional responsibility which would have involved him had the hostiles surrendered unconditionally, and the ministers therefore accepted total responsibility for terms. The governor believed that he could treat the hostiles more leniently than his ministers, who wanted to offer precise peace conditions to avoid parliamentary and public blame for continuance of the war. The ministers doubted that the rebels would accept precise terms,²⁹⁷ though the eight-point peace program, agreed most knowledgeable Basuto officials, seemed a deterrent to future war and a guarantee for future prosperity.²⁹⁸ Although Robinson attempted to cajole the ministers, they remained adamant to satisfy the country and secure a lasting peace and thought a trial for the three rebel leaders was necessary to protect Loyalists and future rule over Basutoland.²⁹⁹

Regarding the true enemy intent, Colonel Carrington reported the rebels busily schantzing Boleka Ridge.³⁰⁰ The enemy fortified their positions and, pretending to negotiate until completion of the harvest, planned to fight indefinitely.³⁰¹

General Clarke, in view of the posture of his foes during the armistice, revised his estimate to 8,000 soldiers, excluding garrison troops, needed in

²⁹⁷ B.S.P., (1881), LXVII, 604-05, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, March 5, 1881.

²⁹⁸ Ibid., 603, ltr. Sprigg, March 1, 1881.

²⁹⁹ Ibid., 598, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, February 28, 1881.

³⁰⁰ Ibid., 608, Summary of events in Basutoland since March 1, 1881.

³⁰¹ Ibid., 604, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, March 5, 1881.

the war zone,³⁰² yet colonial forces already stood prepared for a powerful and final offensive.³⁰³ The enemy abided in a worse situation than previously, yet the Pall Mall Gazette observed that perhaps Carrington was successful in some February operations only because the rebels believed the armistice was already in effect and did not resist.³⁰⁴ To the colonial headquarters camp near Mafeteng came Lerothodi and other enemy chiefs, and, as they conversed with Colonel Brabant and other officers about the campaigning, Lerothodi admitted that he could not stop the killing of wounded soldiers.³⁰⁵ Possibly during this interim, Mama Letsie, educated at Cape Town and once a Government clerk, invited Shervinton to his camp, where the officer drank champagne and met with Chief Letsie.³⁰⁶

The Transvaal war, in reflection, accentuated how tenuous was the basic logistical lifeline of Cape troops in Basutoland. The rebels still maintained high martial spirit in February but were desperate for victory. Their confusion about disarmament and submission was nonexistent; if the hostiles had desired peace, they would have submitted. Cape ministers magnanimously published fair, lenient, and specific peace terms but did not allow enough time for enemy deliberations.

MARCH 1881

In March, the enemy could still fight effectively when they wanted. A

³⁰²Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 289.

³⁰³The Times (London), February 18, 1881, p. 5.

³⁰⁴Pall Mall Gazette (London), February 21, 1881, p. 4.

³⁰⁵Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 166.

³⁰⁶Shervinton, The Shervintons, pp. 84-85.

Carrington patrol on March 18 moved within 2,000 yards of rebel schantzen, where the troops waited in vain for an enemy attack.³⁰⁷ On the 22nd, rapid firing from artillery halted a rebel assault³⁰⁸ on a Clarke patrol between Boleka Ridge and Tangesberg, but the general did not want to fight the enemy at close quarters while outflanked;³⁰⁹ thus, after 6 hours of fighting, the outcome was indecisive.³¹⁰ Two days later, about 600 hostiles attacked Mafeteng and stole 195 horses and 192 cattle.³¹¹ The enemy, reported the Pall Mall Gazette, not only had halted the advance of colonial forces but also had stymied them by stealing horses and cattle.³¹²

Colonel Wavell, commander of Griqualand East troops, despite optimistic battle reports and his opinion that the rebels were much overrated, was dissatisfied with his commander, General Clarke. The Brownlee force meanwhile drove Griqualand rebels into the uninhabited Drakensberg mountain range.³¹³

MALEVOLENT MEDDLING BY FRENCH MISSIONARIES

During the war, the Paris Evangelical Society missionaries in Basutoland, together with their English accomplices urging British intervention and falsifying colonial conduct of the war, advised Secretary Kimberley that if the war continued, Basuto respect for Britain would vanish, and the rebels would

³⁰⁷ Pall Mall Gazette (London), March 24, 1881, p. 6.

³⁰⁸ The Times (London), March 29, 1881, p. 5.

³⁰⁹ Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, p. 46.

³¹⁰ Pall Mall Gazette (London), March 28, 1881, p. 6.

³¹¹ Shervinton, The Shervintons, p. 85.

³¹² Pall Mall Gazette (London), March 29, 1881, p. 4.

³¹³ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 167-68.

flee to the mountains to start guerrilla warfare. A delay by London until the end of the rebellion to dispatch a commission to inquire about Basuto grievances, offer peace conditions, and grant amnesties would protract Basuto alienation. The Loyalists, continued the PES, disliked fighting "friends" and relatives. Unless the British formed a native reserve, the colony would confiscate most of Basutoland.³¹⁴ The Aborigines Protection Society, which apologized for interfering in colonial affairs, maintained that the Basutos were victims of brutal party politics,³¹⁵ and it protested the inhuman treatment of the rebels and the alleged proposed confiscation of rebel land. The APS dismissed the reluctance of the Earl of Kimberley to intervene by its allegation that there was sufficient reason for Imperial intercession at any time and that everyone except political racketeers would welcome such action.³¹⁶ James A. Froude, noted commentator on South African affairs in this period, signed with others a petition which contended that the Basutos did not want Cape Colony rule and that the war aggravated tribal administration. Surmising that the Sprigg ministry had caused the hostilities, he believed that the Basutos were in danger of vanishing like other tribes, even though he admitted that the militarily secure rebels outnumbered the troops, and he wanted British rule for the tribe.³¹⁷ Froude also introduced APS-favored pro-rebel legislation to Kimberley, who answered that if London imposed itself at an inopportune time, Cape Colony in the future would refuse to expend the funds necessary to govern Basutoland should it come under direct British control. Great Britain, more impartial and moderate than the colony, continued the Secretary, must

³¹⁴ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 705, ltr. PES to Kimberley, December 9, 1880.

³¹⁵ Pall Mall Gazette (London), November 18, 1880, p. 4.

³¹⁶ Ibid., November 19, 1880, pp. 1-2.

³¹⁷ The Times (London), November 19, 1880, p. 8.

use its influence only at the proper time.³¹⁸

The miscreant Mabile, further justifying British intercession, declared that responsible government had limits, that numerous knowledgeable inhabitants of the colony opposed the war, and that numerous soldiers fought only because of duty. The certainty of British intervention greatly pleased the pastor, because the Sprigg ministry would probably collapse, and because intervention would justify rebel faith in London. After other rebel tribes learned of British leniency, they would submit to peace terms.³¹⁹

The "Mabile Gang," moreover, descended on the British Government like a plague of locusts, because the pastor was determined to influence British officials and the public to end the war. Knowing well the position of rebel chiefs, he suggested that the APS lobby for this position in Parliament. London overruled the idea of Mabile accompanying a Government commission on the Basutos to Cape Colony, whereupon the missionary distributed to churches in France and Switzerland a petition which supported the PES, subsequently handed the document with 24,000 signatures to Parliament, and next sent a memorial to the House of Lords. To Lord Kimberley, the English branch of the Evangelical Alliance offered a statement in which Mabile asked if Great Britain would allow troops to crush and disperse the rebels, which was supposedly the declared objective of the colonial commanders.³²⁰ The English society requested its Government to alleviate rebel grievances and to protect both Christian Loyalists and missionaries and their property, condemned the harshness of the war, and reminded London of the services that the missionaries

³¹⁸ Pall Mall Gazette (London), November 19, 1880, p. 7.

³¹⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 713-14, ltr. Mabile to Kimberley, December 27, 1880.

³²⁰ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 278-81.

had brought to the natives,³²¹ services which the PES specified in education and religion.³²² War was ravaging the Basutos and endangering the missionaries, wrote the Swiss Evangelical Society; thus, this community pleaded for a peace settlement as insurance for their missions.³²³

The PES, itself supposedly in a hazardous position, proffered possible peace conditions. While these churches alleged that they remained in the war zone to aid Loyalists, find a refuge for the ill and elderly, preserve mission stations, some of which the hostiles burned, and solicit the natives to seek British protection and influence other tribes to do the same, the rebels suspected pacific French advice, and colonists accused the clerics of endorsing the rebellion. Because of suffering to the missionaries, the Frenchmen pleaded for an end to the war, and they thought the Cape Government in a peace settlement must disallow land confiscation, seek only rebel submission and a tribal monetary and cattle fine, grant amnesties to all hostiles except perpetrators of atrocities, and allow the High Commissioner and magistrates to administer the country and register and tax Basuto guns.³²⁴

The misled Mabilie, in addition, deliberated on a rebel peace proposal in January, 1881. The pastor secured a safe-conduct pass for his emissary, who advised the rebels on formulating a peace offer. As Mabilie believed that the rebels had won almost every battle, he thought the hostiles must only promise not to fight the Queen, ask for complete amnesty for all, and

³²¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 734, ltr. Evangelical Alliance (British Branch) to Kimberley, December, 1880.

³²² Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 257 (1881), 1070, Mr. Fowler speaking, January 20, 1881.

³²³ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 746, ltr. Evangelical Alliance (Swiss Branch) to English ministers, January 14, 1881.

³²⁴ Ibid., 736-37, Memorial addressed to Her Majesty's Ministers by the . . . PES, December, 1880.

seek identical living conditions as before the war. He told Letsie to persuade his sons to make peace; otherwise, troops would crush the paramount chief and the rebels.³²⁵

The PES, to assist these hostiles, audaciously requested the English Red Cross to send hospital supplies at British expense through the military lines in Basutoland to the reprobate Dr. Casalis at Morija, who had directed other relief supplies to the rebels.³²⁶ The PES, indicated Kimberley, must apply to the Cape Government for such a worthy endeavor.³²⁷

The PES and other societies, in honest judgement, among their succession of errors might have consulted with colonial officials but instead waded into colonial partisanship and politics and insidiously spread their version of a colonial peace plan, together with Froude spread false rumors which enhanced the rebel cause, and interfered in Cape military affairs. The French missionaries could have evacuated if they felt endangered, their peace conditions were too permissive and presumptuous, and evangelical personnel compromised their status as resident aliens of Cape Colony by deprecating colonial action and by directly aiding the rebel forces with the sanction of Kimberley.

Adolphe Mabile, in addition, represented the rebel position and ignored the tenets of responsible government at Cape Town. His tunnel vision notion of campaign results was a feat, and his peace proposal was much too generous to the hostiles. He and other tittering toadies in clerical garb influenced the rebels to persevere for more favorable peace proposals, and the possible prolongation of hostilities was the most catastrophic result of PES meddling.

³²⁵ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 283-84, 286-88.

³²⁶ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 740, ltr. PES to Colonial Office, January 6, 1881.

³²⁷ Ibid., 740, ltr. Colonial Office to PES, January 10, 1881.

CONTEMPLATION OF BRITISH MILITARY ASSISTANCE

A question vital to Cape Colony during the Basuto Civil War and Rebellion was that of active British aid in subjugation of the rebels. Administrator Clifford, reflecting official policy, in September, 1880, reported to Kimberley that whatever dimensions the conflict might reach, he would not employ Imperial troops.³²⁸ The British Government, replied the secretary, concurred in that decision,³²⁹ and he later admonished The Times that no one in a Natal force raised by officers for the Basuto war possessed an English commission.³³⁰ Administrator Strahan added that the Cape Government could and would suppress the rebels alone if allowed to decide the future government of Basutoland.³³¹ Prime Minister Sprigg in November, 1880, announced the rapid response to mobilization made by whites and blacks in the colony, which made the use of British units unnecessary.³³² South African colonists, commented the Pall Mall Gazette, always had tried to dispense with Imperial interference by declining to accept military aid against native attacks, and if the colony without Imperial forces could subdue the Basuto rebels, every colonist would agree that it was solely a colonial privilege to deal with the defeated hostiles. The paper, however, thought it extremely doubtful that the colony could wage war without British assistance.³³³

Cape officials, in reality, sought British military aid, as they wanted

³²⁸ Ibid., 308, ltr. Clifford to Kimberley, September 20, 1880.

³²⁹ Ibid., 308, ltr. Kimberley to Clifford, September 22, 1880.

³³⁰ The Times (London), November 20, 1880, p. 6.

³³¹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 309, ltr. Strahan to Kimberley, September 28, 1880.

³³² Ibid., 723, ltr. Sprigg, December 8, 1880.

³³³ Pall Mall Gazette (London), October 19, 1880, p. 1.

assistance from Imperial officers while General Clarke was absent from military headquarters, and Clifford asked permission to use Imperial officers on the Basuto battlefield,³³⁴ whereupon Kimberley refused this last request.³³⁵ Cape Town later requested the use of a Natal officer from a British garrison to act as Assistant-Staff Officer under Clarke.³³⁶ Sprigg in December thanked Crown agents for promptly filling large colonial orders for ammunition.³³⁷

Sir George Grey, who wanted to redirect the use of British power, cautioned that, as the might of the Cape Government rested mostly on the support of British troops, the colonial ministers could not excuse themselves from responsibility to the Crown. British power, he added, supported the colonials in a war which a majority of Englishmen thought unjustifiable and which dishonored Great Britain. Cape Colony, with British garrisons in reserve, sent more soldiers against the rebels than otherwise possible. Britain, believed Grey, must either stop colonial prosecution of the war or use Imperial troops to quash the rebels quickly, whatever the cost, because, if the war continued, the Basuto tribe might disintegrate.³³⁸

Queen Victoria, in the significance of the eventual decision on British military succor, asked Kimberley why Imperial troops had not yet intervened against the rebels. Governor Frere, believed both the secretary and Gladstone, had biased the Queen, though Kimberley later informed the APS lobbyists that he could not refuse a heretofore unreceived request by Sir Gordon

³³⁴ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 308, ltr. Clifford to Kimberley, September 23, 1880.

³³⁵ Ibid., 308, ltr. Kimberley to Clifford, September 24, 1880.

³³⁶ Ibid., 358, ltr. Strahan to Kimberley, October 4, 1880.

³³⁷ Ibid., 724, ltr. Sprigg, December 8, 1880.

³³⁸ Grey, "South Africa," pp. 935-36, 952.

Sprigg for Imperial troops.³³⁹ Though a few experienced officers would have contributed invaluable service to the colony, asserts De Kiewiet, the British Government did not offer troops, because Cape Colony had blocked South African confederation. The Basuto conflict was the first colonial war since early in the century in which the British Government helped neither militarily nor financially.³⁴⁰ William Greswell and English Liberals both assert that Kimberley and much of the English press opposed the war and that British reluctance to help implied that, if the colonists could not fight their own battles, they could not handle responsible government.³⁴¹ British failure to aid Cape Colony, related one rebel prisoner, encouraged enemy resistance. The Cape Times noted that the refusal by London to help fight the rebels was tantamount to telling the frontier tribes to revolt then or never.³⁴²

Colonial appropriation of a few Imperial officers, in conclusory judgment, did not violate the policy announced by Kimberley, who, despite his assertions to the contrary, denied Imperial army personnel to Cape Town. British failure to offer moral and military support to Cape Colony convinced the rebels to seek more favorable consideration by prolonging the hostilities.

POTENTIAL BRITISH INTERVENTION IN THE CONFLICT

Having circumvented the military bolstering of Cape Colony, the Colonial

³³⁹ Clement Francis Goodfellow, Great Britain and South African Confederation 1870-1881 (Cape Town: Oxford University Press, 1966), p. 197.

³⁴⁰ De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, pp. 267-68.

³⁴¹ Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 84-85; cf., Frere, "The Basutos . . . Cape of Good Hope," p. 199.

³⁴² Pall Mall Gazette (London), December 10, 1880, p. 3.

Office refused to define for Cape Town the extent of the Imperial Government role in the Basuto conflict. Cape Colony, insisted the Colonial Office, forced war on itself, and Prime Minister Sprigg, believed the Earl of Kimberley, was intent upon hostilities.³⁴³ Sir Gordon in September, 1880, had the impression that Cape Town would be allowed to suppress the Basuto rebels without British interference,³⁴⁴ however, Kimberley soon after said that the Home Government would consider the program of the Cape ministry but could not in advance agree to a settlement between the colony and the rebels because of future contingencies.³⁴⁵ The next month, Kimberley commented that Cape Town would have much leverage in deciding the future government of Basutoland, condemned the rebels, and wished Sir Gordon a rapid victory, but warned Sprigg that London had considered the Basutos loyal until the application of the PPA, which he thought had caused the outbreak. Kimberley, for fear of encouraging the enemy to resist measures stated publicly, refused to discuss British intervention further at the time.³⁴⁶ Though one author indicates that British concern perhaps signified London's feeling of responsibility for the tribe,³⁴⁷ De Kiewiet believes further that Britain could not allow Cape Colony to wreak vengeance and that, in native policy, responsible government was subordinate to the Home Government. The Crown was disposed to aid in a peace settlement, Lord Kimberley told Governor Robinson, and certainly would if the Cape ministry imposed too severe terms, and further, if colonial military

³⁴³ De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p. 268.

³⁴⁴ B.S.P., (1891), LXVI, 340, ltr. Sprigg to Clifford, September 17, 1880.

³⁴⁵ Ibid., 309-10, ltr. Kimberley to Strahan, September 30, 1880.

³⁴⁶ Ibid., 363-64, ltr. Kimberley to Strahan, October 28, 1880.

³⁴⁷ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 278.

action failed, Britain would reconsider Cape control over all native territories.³⁴⁸

Sir Gordon, in rebuttal, in December, 1880, expounded his views on British interference. He condemned as encouraging rebelliousness and a victorious attitude among rebels the English parliamentary declarations distributed in Cape Colony and circulated among the Basutos. After troops had crushed the rebellion, believed the Prime Minister, Britain would not interfere with the peace settlement in Basutoland, and, according to the Cape ministry, would give the necessary moral support to uphold law and order, because Cape Colony had freed Great Britain from the burdens of administering native territories in South Africa. The colony in the war was making large sacrifices in men, property, and money, and understood that only Cape Town would conclude the final peace arrangement.³⁴⁹

Sir George Grey, moreover, in attaching blame for the manner of British pressure, maintained that helpless Kimberley supervised Cape Colony too leniently and that, unable to prevent Cape Town administrators from acting against his will, he heaped all responsibility on them.³⁵⁰ Sir Bartle Frere countered this adversary by remarking that the radical members of the Liberal Party who censured Frere for participation in colonial politics ironically demanded the forcible intervention of the Home Government in order to suspend the colonial constitution and administer Basuto matters under the direction of the Secretary of State for Colonial Affairs. The radical Liberals by their abhorrent suggestion, asserted Frere, did not seek to uphold law or protect

³⁴⁸ De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, pp. 268-69.

³⁴⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVI, 723, ltr. Sprigg, December 8, 1880.

³⁵⁰ Grey, "South Africa," pp. 934-35.

the lives and property of British subjects but only wanted to shield the rebels from just punishment. Upon receipt of responsible government, he concluded, Cape Colony had reached a social and political state which made the slightest British jurisdiction inadvisable.³⁵¹

While Lord Kimberley, in clarification of prescribed procedures in March, 1881, warned that London had some control in making peace, because acts that dealt with Basuto land, as all other land inhabited by natives under colonial jurisdiction, had to receive British endorsement, he acknowledged that it was impossible to carry on a government if the mother country constantly interfered. Responsible government did not include control of native affairs unless indicated by provision, mentioned Viscount Bury, an English member of Parliament, and the High Commissioner normally administered native matters.³⁵² Prime Minister Gladstone declared that London would not suggest binding peace conditions which Cape Town must offer the rebels but that the Home Government would be a party to any armistice.³⁵³

In condemnation of colonial presumptions and actions from the legislative branch of British Government, Sir George Campbell, in the House of Commons, regretted that colonial troops systematically destroyed rebel property and crops during the February armistice.³⁵⁴ Sir Wilfrid Lawson, another member, in January, 1881, complained that Cape troops used dynamite charges against the rebels. He also vilified Cape Colony newspapers which reviled Lord Kimberley for denying Sprigg the right to distribute spoils to the colo-

³⁵¹Frere, "The Basutos . . . Cape of Good Hope," pp. 177, 194, 200.

³⁵²Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 259 (1881), 1794-97, Earl of Kimberley and Viscount Bury speaking, March 24, 1881.

³⁵³Ibid., 330, Prime Minister Gladstone speaking, March 4, 1881.

³⁵⁴Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 258 (1881), 1652, Sir George Campbell speaking, February 24, 1881.

nials after the war, a denial which dampened colonial fighting spirits. If the war went badly, believed colonists, Imperial troops would aid them; therefore, swift British mediation, according to Lawson, would save Britain from such danger and discredit and would protect the hostiles. R. W. Fowler believed that the Sprigg war policies would drive the Basutos back into savagery.

Other members, to the contrary, discussed the stipulations of British intercession and colonial responsibility. Sir Henry Holland, who had served in the Colonial Office, thought that the Basuto war was an internal colonial matter. To discuss the wisdom of British mediation while colonial soldiers courageously fought the rebels was pointless, surmised Holland, for he believed that the Imperial Government must intervene only if asked by the governor, or if the colony confiscated large areas of Basutoland for white settlement. In the latter eventuality, into Natal, the Orange Free State, and adjacent native lands would overflow Basutos in large droves. Mr. Donald Currie worried that news of British mediation would bolster the rebels and contended that the colony had not desired war. Cape Colony by itself still might end the war, said Mr. Grant Duff, the Undersecretary for Colonial Affairs, and he could find no evidence that Cape Town would make a vindictive settlement. Britain, he declared, could not appear the enemy of the white
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 man.

Greswell comments that the British reproach alienated colonists, who wanted to colonize some Basuto land, and bolstered the rebels, who hoped to retain all their territory. London gave the rebels moral support by refusing either to disavow the PPA immediately or to help the colony enforce the mea-

³⁵⁵ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 257 (1881), 1068-69, 1071-72, 1077-78, 1081, 1085, 1087-88, Sir Wilfrid Lawson, Mr. R. W. Fowler, Sir Henry Holland, Mr. Donald Currie, and Mr. Grant Duff speaking, January 20, 1881.

sure and conclude the war successfully, and the hostiles therefore thought relations between Britain and Cape Colony were antagonistic, and, well-informed of British posture, continued to resist. If Kimberley had known this last fact, contends Greswell, he would have muffled himself, and if the Home Government had not hampered and aggravated Cape Colony, the colony would have grown wealthier, the settlers grown more loyal to Britain, and the natives become more peaceful.³⁵⁶

There were, furthermore, several reasons why the Sprigg ministry resented further British interference. Colonial Secretary Kimberley considered the rebel peace petition important, urged Governor Robinson to pressure the Cape ministers towards a settlement and to arrange terms to end the conflict,³⁵⁷ and, as Kimberley believed in January that the colony could not establish order soon in Basutoland, suggested that the friendly intervention of London could restore stability. As a British settlement depended on as yet unknown factors but could resolve the war if the rebels placed themselves under British supervision, the secretary offered to arrange for a commission to recommend peace terms, even though he considered the direct intervention of the Crown preferable, as the Basutos looked for advice to the office of High Commissioner.³⁵⁸ Lord Kimberley in February regretted that Robinson had failed to interfere in a Basuto peace accord and condemned the eight-point peace program,³⁵⁹ but the colonial ministers, hoped the secretary, would mollify their

³⁵⁶ Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 85-89, 91-92, 99, 104.

³⁵⁷ B.S.P., (1881), LXVII, 593, ltr. Kimberley to Robinson, January 31, 1881.

³⁵⁸ Pall Mall Gazette (London), January 11, 1881, p. 7.

³⁵⁹ B.S.P., (1881), LXVII, 598, ltr. Kimberley to Robinson, February 25, 1881.

conditions, especially in regard to rebel leaders.³⁶⁰ He furthermore announced that Britain had neither contributed to nor promulgated the eight-point ultimatum offered the rebels.³⁶¹ No Cape Town officials, announced Sprigg, questioned the right of the Imperial Government to instruct the governor to disapprove of colonial actions. The rebels, however, declared that they owed no allegiance to Cape Colony and intimated to the ministers that, because London considered the terms too severe, hostile forces could receive better terms by continuing to resist.³⁶² The Cape Parliament promoted neither direct British intervention nor formation of a British commission to recommend a settlement; thus, Robinson, while he could try to influence peace terms, could not deal directly with the hostiles.³⁶³ The colonial ministers complained to Robinson of the British parliamentary rejection of their peace conditions³⁶⁴ and believed a statement made in the House of Commons by Mr. Duff, which falsely related a colonial ministry desire for the hostiles to make peace arrangements with Governor Robinson, would make peace more unattainable.³⁶⁵ Although Governor Robinson and his ministers formally protested British objections to the eight points, objections that stiffened enemy resistance,³⁶⁶ the governor, according to Duff, did not enjoy enough trust from the hostiles to make peace

³⁶⁰ Ibid., 598, ltr. Kimberley to Robinson, February 26, 1881.

³⁶¹ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 259 (1881), 330-31, Prime Minister Gladstone speaking, March 4, 1881.

³⁶² B.S.P., (1881), LXVII, 603, ltr. Sprigg, March 1, 1881.

³⁶³ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 258 (1881), 1951-52, Marquess of Hartington speaking, March 1, 1881.

³⁶⁴ B.S.P., (1881), LXVII, 598, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, February 28, 1881.

³⁶⁵ Ibid., 599, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, March 2, 1881; Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 258 (1881), 1523, Mr. Duff speaking, February 22, 1881.

³⁶⁶ Pall Mall Gazette (London), March 2, 1881, p. 8.

arrangements.³⁶⁷ The Cape Government pleaded for understanding and shunned criticism, because a dissolution of the Cape Town Parliament meant the election of numerous Afrikaner members, who, angered over Cape policy in the Transvaal war and allied with the Opposition, might alter the balance of power in Parliament.³⁶⁸ If the Sprigg cabinet fell, an Afrikaner ministry might accede to power and make an unsatisfactory peace with the rebels.³⁶⁹

Internal and external pressure, in conclusion, endangered the Sprigg ministry efforts to honorably end the war. Though shadowy British control over native policy provided legitimate leverage for intercession, the Colonial Office used trickery in this jurisdictional presumption, because Cape Colony administered Basuto rule. The Colonial Office showed an unreasonable negative bias towards the Sprigg ministry, indiscreetly conducted its activities, and stabbed the valiant colonial troops in the back. Even if Kimberley did not intentionally support the rebel cause by continuing to discuss the war, he crippled Cape Town faith in the Colonial Office by intervening and seemed ready to appropriate Cape territory in the face of colonial military defeat or, on the other hand, steal away the colonial fruits of victory. It was conventional for colonial governments to confiscate land and other valuables from a defeated tribal enemy and disperse the tribe. The secretary and British radical Liberals, by seeking to administer a peace settlement, rode roughshod over responsible government, which might have ended the war honorably.

³⁶⁷ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 260 (1881), 359, Mr. Duff speaking, March 31, 1881.

³⁶⁸ Pall Mall Gazette (London), March 29, 1881, p. 4.

³⁶⁹ Ibid., March 3, 1881, p. 4.

CHAPTER VI

THE BASUTO RECONSTRUCTION

THE END OF THE WAR AND THE ROBINSON AWARD

As the war staggered on to a close, further colonial military successes did not impress everyone, and, although colonial forces beat back the rebels from Leribe on April 10, killing 30-40 enemy while losing only 1 soldier,¹ there was a complaint of lethargic, irresponsible, and stupid military maneuvering.² In a skirmish at Maseru, after Colonel Wavell had joined General Clarke in offensive operations, the rebels lost heavily, and the colonials suffered only 3 killed.³ During sporadic military action in May, colonial troops flushed out enemy caves in the Drakensberg.

In April, 1881, both combatants were experiencing mobilization problems. Only 3,000 colonial troops were stationed in Basutoland, 2,000 of them conscripts. In order to entice more volunteers to the front, to enforce the Commando and Levies Act, and to enable burghers to leave the front, Cape parliamentary bills sought to raise infantry corps.⁴ In desperation, Cape Town armed and promised loot to several thousand Bantu.⁵ Lerothodi also at this time was having difficulty maintaining his warriors.⁶

¹The Times (London), April 18, 1881, p. 6.

²Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 169.

³The Times (London), April 20, 1881, p. 5.

⁴Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 168; The Times (London), April 20, 1881, p. 5.

⁵Pall Mall Gazette (London), April 21, 1881, p. 4.

⁶Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 168.

During the next peace overture, Lerothodi and the rest of the rebels, who refused to disperse unless the colonial army left Basutoland, were still occupying Boleka Ridge and from there continued to besiege Magistrate Bell at Leribe.⁷ On April 9, a rebel delegation representing Chiefs Letsie, Lerothodi, and Masupha met with Colonel Griffith at Maseru, and the latter two chiefs promised to stop fighting but refused to surrender.⁸ Lerothodi, jealous of Masupha, waited until April 17 and then submitted to Governor Robinson, ordering his warriors to disarm and return home.⁹ While some rebels refused to scatter, they were not openly hostile to the troops and remained quietly in villages in the war zone to await action by Robinson.

The governor, promulgating another peace initiative and considering the alternative, drew up an award which he thought an honorable proposal that tested rebel willingness to accept reasonable terms. Expediency meant announcing the award quickly, because, if the negotiations foundered and the rebellion continued, the enemy would never again have the opportunity to accept lenient terms. Also, it was necessary to learn immediately if rebels would reject the award, so that a mighty military endeavor could be mounted to crush them. The present military situation in Basutoland was shaky, and a continued campaign would mean moving the troops into winter quarters, resuming the fighting in the spring, and expending £ several million more.¹⁰ The Sprigg ministry now agreed that the governor must arbitrate immediately, with the provision for rebels to eventually surrender their weapons,¹¹ and assumed responsibility for

⁷B.S.P., (1881), LXVII, 615, ltr. Griffith to Robinson, April 26, 1881.

⁸The Times (London), April 14, 1881, p. 6.

⁹Theal, South Africa, XI, 68.

¹⁰B.S.P., (1881), LXVII, 616, ltr. Robinson to colonial ministers, April 27, 1881.

the award in the Cape Parliament.¹² Lord Kimberley willingly sanctioned the new Robinson offer.¹³

On April 29, 1881, Governor Robinson offered the following award: 1) Disarmament. The PPA would continue, however, a liberal interpretation of its provisions would apply to the issuance of licenses for the ownership and carrying of arms. Part of the annual license fees would help pay the interest on the colonial debt incurred from the rebellion. 2) Compensation. The rebel portion of the tribe would pay compensation to Loyalists for property illegally expropriated, restore land, pay for all losses and damages inflicted on Loyalists and traders, and return all government property captured during the rebellion. 3) Fines. The rebel section of the tribe would pay a fine of 5,000 cattle. After the enemy had complied with these conditions, a colonial pledge would guarantee complete amnesty for all hostiles and no confiscation of territory.¹⁴

Although the hostiles publicly accepted some terms, and the crisis seemed passed, there were portents of future problems. The rebels paid part of the cattle fine¹⁵ but refused to return expropriated land, land for which they were waging a civil war;¹⁶ they promised to surrender their guns but turned in only a few muskets.¹⁷ The reverend Mabilile spoke against disarmament; Masupha complained about repayment to Loyalists.¹⁸ Chief Letsie ordered Lerothodi to accept

¹¹ Ibid., 617, ltr. Sprigg and colonial ministers to Robinson, April 29, 1881.

¹² Ibid., 613, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, April 30, 1881.

¹³ Ibid., 608-09, ltr. Kimberley to Robinson, April 6, 1881.

¹⁴ Ibid., 617-18, ltr. Robinson to colonial ministers, April 29, 1881.

¹⁵ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 169; Vindex maintains that the rebels surrendered only scrawny cattle, Vindex, Cecil Rhodes, p. 47.

¹⁶ De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p. 290.

¹⁷ Walker, ed., South Africa, p. 491.

all terms offered except disarmament. Cape Town, believed the yet belligerent hostiles, could not enforce the award provisions.¹⁹

Cape parliamentary opposition to the Sprigg policy in Basutoland heralded a change in government. Thomas Fuller was leading opposition to the native policy of Sir Gordon Sprigg. His ally, Thomas Scanlen,²⁰ who led the moderate English faction in the House Assembly, was elected leader of the opposition party,²¹ the party which during the war had exaggerated rebel victories and colonial defeats.²² As Imperial Government favoritism towards the rebels angered both Cape legislative houses, a strong legislative feeling arose to disannex Basutoland. On May 9, Scanlen assumed the offices of Prime Minister and Attorney-General of Cape Colony, Johannes Wilhelmus Sauer²³ became Secretary for Native Affairs, J. C. Molteno accepted the post of Colonial Secretary, and Jan Hendrik Hofmeyr²⁴ was designated minister-at-large.²⁵

¹⁸Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 289-90.

¹⁹Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 169.

²⁰S.A.D.N.B., p. 330. Scanlen: Born at Cape Town, Thomas Scanlen became an attorney and represented Cradock in the Cape Parliament from 1870-96. He served as Prime Minister from 1881-84. Having become a legal adviser to the British South Africa Company in 1894, he soon after moved to Rhodesia, where he gained a post in the Executive Council in 1896 and was Acting-Administrator of Rhodesia in 1898 and from 1903-06.

²¹Pall Mall Gazette (London), May 7, 1881, p. 3; Fuller, Rhodes, pp. 3-4.

²²Frere, "The Basutos . . . Cape of Good Hope," p. 194.

²³S.A.D.N.B., p. 329. Sauer: Johannes Sauer was born at Burghersdorp, Cape Colony. A lawyer at Aliwal North, he entered the Cape Parliament in 1876. Although first a supporter of Sprigg, he served as Secretary for Native Affairs under Scanlen from 1881-84 and as Colonial Secretary under Cecil Rhodes; A resolute defender of non-whites, he considered himself a philosophical radical. Sauer later was a member of both the National Convention of 1908-09 and the Union Parliament and served as Minister for Native Affairs from 1910-13, Robertson, South Africa, p. 141.

²⁴S.A.D.N.B., pp. 171-72. Hofmeyr: Born at Cape Town and educated at the South Africa College, Hofmeyr acquired fame as the editor of the Zuid Afrikaan newspaper, became a political champion of the farmer, and merged his own political organization with the Afrikaner Bond, of which he became leader. His

There were a number of reasons underlying the collapse of the Sprigg ministry. Its attorney-general had resigned out of disgust for the repressive Sprigg native policy,²⁶ and his successor was regarded as being more underhanded in native policy than the prime minister.²⁷ Most legislators believed that the ministry was growing apathetic, and, early in May, the Opposition in the House Assembly voted against supply appropriations to troops at the front.²⁸ Sir Gordon, on the other hand, had directed the entire Basuto war by himself, calling out troops and personally raising money. Colonial military failure, believed the Pall Mall Gazette, had rendered unjustifiable the Sprigg snubbing of Parliament during the war.²⁹ Several members of the Sprigg party no longer voted with their leader, thus reversing his majority,³⁰ and the prime minister received a vote of censure on May 4.³¹

Among presumptions of the new ministry, it expected the Basutos and other rebel tribes to anticipate favorable treatment,³² considered the rebels their friends, and foresaw immediate submission.³³ Scanlen, however, who was an authority on native affairs, meant to prolong the war for the benefit of ex-

greatest achievement was forcing recognition of the equality of the Afrikaans and English languages in Cape Colony, and he almost prevented the outbreak of the Second Anglo-Boer War. Hofmeyr later assisted in drafting a constitution for the Union of South Africa.

²⁵Theal, South Africa, XI, 69-70.

²⁶Pall Mall Gazette (London), May 4, 1881, p. 8; cf., Ibid., May 11, 1881, p. 8.

²⁷Ibid., May 6, 1881, p. 4.

²⁸Ibid., May 5, 1881, p. 6.

²⁹Ibid., May 7, 1881, p. 3.

³⁰Ibid., May 30, 1881, p. 8.

³¹J. G. Lockhart and C. M. Woodhouse, Cecil Rhodes (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1963), p. 72.

³²Theal, South Africa, XI, 70.

³³Pall Mall Gazette (London), May 17, 1881, p. 4.

pansionist Free State intimates of Hofmeyr, according to one author.³⁴ The new ministry asked if London was prepared to arbitrate further should the rebels not accept the award.³⁵ The Home Government, answered Kimberley equivocally, would not interfere with the Cape Government in Basutoland.³⁶

In the middle of May, to the satisfaction of the new ministry, Letsie, Lerothodi, Joel, and their subordinate chiefs, but not Masupha, wrote that they understood the award and would abide by it. They apologized for rebelling against a government which they had willingly accepted³⁷ and began to register their guns.³⁸

Aided by the British and French Red Cross, the reverend Mabile, as the PES continued to help these rebels, purchased medical supplies in England for the hostiles. Prime Minister Sprigg at Cape Town detained for six weeks the supplies as enemy contraband and in vain advised the missionaries instead to offer their services to colonial aid stations.³⁹

The Sprigg ministry, in appraisal, had accepted the Robinson Award because of British pressure to end the war, and the Scanlen ministry was too optimistic about enemy submission. Provisions of the award should have more strictly applied the PPA and should have provided for the trial of rebel ringleaders; the colonial eight-point program would have better served the situation. Masupha instigated his cohorts to do all the fighting, while he hid out safe-

³⁴ Ian D. Colvin, Cecil John Rhodes (London: T. C. and E. C. Jack, 1912), p. 34; Pall Mall Gazette (London), May 9, 1881, p. 4.

³⁵ B.S.P., (1881), LXVII, 614, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, May 22, 1881.

³⁶ Ibid., 614-15, ltr. Kimberley to Robinson, May 23, 1881.

³⁷ Ibid., 613, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, May 16, 1881.

³⁸ Theal, South Africa, XI, 70.

³⁹ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 290-91.

ly in his lair. The parliamentary opposition stabbed the troops in the back, as did the gross misconduct of the English and French Red Cross.

COMMENTARY ON AND IMPLICATIONS OF THE COLONIAL AND
REBEL MILITARY CONDUCT IN THE REBELLION

Historians agree that either Cape Colony suffered defeat or at least failed to win military victory over the rebels for various reasons in the Basuto Rebellion, whereas I found Cape Colony falsely and unjustly maligned in its combat role against the rebels.

Colonial troops, says De Kiewiet, retreated from Basutoland in defeat,⁴⁰ and R. T. Hall, official historian of the PAG, terms the war disastrous. South African historian F. Perridge indicates that the unsuccessful conflict evidenced a waste of more than £3,000,000, political incompetence, bickering in the officer corps, lack of campaign management, lethargic combat, and public apathy. He also notes the effect of poor equipment, improper hygiene, and illness on the soldiers.⁴¹ No documentation, however, shows that colonial troops fled from Basutoland in defeat, notwithstanding strategic evacuations and withdrawals to base camps from the battlefield whenever the rebels surrounded or vastly outnumbered colonial forces. Though some burgher units along with other volunteers deserted from the front, these men fled from their own army, not from the rebels. Colonial forces never lost a battle; at Kalabani in October, 1880, troops after the initial shock drove off the hostiles.

⁴⁰ De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p. 290.

⁴¹ Orpen, Prince Alfred's Guard 1856-1966, pp. 26, 45-46.

Cecil Rhodes alleges that, in this unnecessary war,⁴² the rebels worsted Cape Colony,⁴³ which made no impression on the aggressive and victorious enemy entrenched in mountains.⁴⁴ Rebels, in reality, after serious setbacks fled to the mountains, where it was logistically impossible for a large army to follow, and where the enemy had definite advantage in trapping or ambushing the soldiers. Available troops could not have dislodged hostiles strongly schantzed in mountain strongholds, positions which provided ample defense, shelter, and food for fleeing or tired rebel warriors.

Colonial forces, believes Stevens, were stymied in a war which cost the colony £5,000,000,⁴⁵ and Thomas Fuller maintains that colonial troops never penetrated further than 8-10 miles into Basutoland and that their campaign failed.⁴⁶ Cape Town, contends Lagden, abandoned some magistrate stations, and its army never advanced more than a few miles from Mafeteng.⁴⁷ Actually, the assumption that the colonials never pacified much rebel territory does not reflect badly upon the troops, because, at some points, only 8-10 miles from the border stretched the Maluti Mountains to the eastward, terrain largely uninhabited and wherein impossible to locate rebel positions without more manpower than available to Cape Town.

The hostiles, continues Lagden, resisted an irreproachable military power having ample funds, manpower, and scientific ingenuity to enforce its rule. Rebels mistakenly exalted their military prowess, whereas lack of colonial military organization and political strife actually insured their advantage.⁴⁷ Eric

⁴²Vindex, Cecil Rhodes, p. 211.

⁴³Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 297.

⁴⁴Colvin, Cecil John Rhodes, p. 35.

⁴⁵Stevens, Lesotho, etc., p. 27.

⁴⁶Fuller, Rhodes, p. 3.

Walker and George Theal declare that rebels successfully thwarted the colonial soldiers and inflicted a much resented blow to white prestige in South Africa.⁴⁸ Troops fought only defensively, according to another source,⁴⁹ and A. Aylward believes that the hostiles held colonial troops in contempt.⁵⁰ Catastrophic rebel losses, in actuality, greatly outnumbered colonial casualties, not so much from the difference in weaponry, but because the rebels were careless about their protection, and it seemed odd that rebels should hold in contempt soldiers who consistently beat them. European pride indeed received a shock, because white troops did not militarily vanquish a black rebellion, and because the war ended unsatisfactorily for Cape Town.

Concerning the quality of manpower available for the cumbersome mobilization, enough trained soldiers were never mobilized for the war, and those mobilized were not equipped properly at first or sent to the front quickly, as army transport was primitive. The recruitment laws and inducements for military service were ineffectual. Prime Minister Sprigg from necessity personally mobilized units for the front, because, if he had convened the Cape Parliament, debating would have slowed or disallowed the movement of troops. According to Louis Cohen, with the exception of the CMR and Loyalists, the Carrington force was inefficient. The volunteers were seedy characters, especially those recruited from Kimberley, and partly consisted of foreigners and Cape Colony naval deserters.⁵¹ Pretoria and the diamond fields supplied mercenaries who relished war as a pastime, valued the life of a native as less than a dog,

⁴⁷ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 525, 561.

⁴⁸ Walker, ed., South Africa, p. 491; cf., Theal, South Africa, XI, 80.

⁴⁹ The Nation, XXXI (July 1-Dec. 31, 1880), 435.

⁵⁰ Aylward, "Basuto," p. 340; cf., Lagden, The Basutos, II, 561.

⁵¹ Cohen, Reminiscences of Kimberley, p. 431.

and desired booty.⁵²

Strategically, the troops fought offensively, in that they struck out from fortified enclaves, and only by necessity fought defensively. Too few troops in the field precluded a sweep of the entire Basuto lowlands, and logistics was too primitive to supply and feed soldiers for such an operation. A heavier concentration at Mafeteng might have permitted the pacification of a larger section of the country, but troops systematically pacified only small areas, because, as soon as the troops marched through a location, hostiles would re-occupy the territory. General Clarke never captured his prime objective of Morija, and Colonel Bayly by vegetating at Maseru hampered the campaign.

In guerrilla warfare, pitted against these men, the rebels chose battle sites to their own advantage, reluctantly engaged in pitched battles, used hit-and-run or surprise tactics while trying to split colonial ranks, cut supply lines, and capture horses, and could afford more combat losses.

Although Cape Town blundering, in reflection, caused most of the failure in the campaign, there was no substitute for military victory, and domestic and British hindrance of the war effort ultimately produced a no-win war policy which in turn generated poor morale in the army.

RECONSTRUCTION: FIRST PHASE

Rebel words and deeds did not signify total acceptance of the Robinson Award. Secretary for Native Affairs Sauer visited Basutoland, held pitsos between June 21 and 25, where Chief Moletsane and others registered their guns,

⁵² Pall Mall Gazette (London), October 28, 1880, p. 4.

and said that rebels had paid more cattle toward their fine⁵³ (Masupha later sent in 405 cattle), thus paying almost the entire fine.⁵⁴ The rebels, however, felt that the results of the colonial military campaigning had justified their struggle. The burgher volunteers so vociferously demanded their release that they were discharged, and most other volunteers and the yeomanry received permission to leave the front; thus, Sauer had no force to back his authority and to protect Loyalists. Meetings held throughout the country accomplished little.⁵⁵ Most rebel chiefs, lying purposely to the contrary, did not observe the award. They did not restore Loyalist property, surrendered few guns, and paid little hut tax; thus, the colonial treasury had to provide foodstuffs to Loyalists.

Chief Magistrate Griffith, now that the war was over, asked to retire because of ill-health, and on August 25, 1881, Joseph Orpen assumed the post at Maseru⁵⁶ upon invitation from Secretary Sauer. Emil Rolland, brother-in-law to Orpen and also a good friend of the Basutos, became resident magistrate at Maseru. Griffith actually quit out of pity for the unfortunate Loyalists, and his absence from the inequities which presently transpired comforted Loyalists George and Tsekelo Moshesh.⁵⁷

At a pitso in August, where Orpen was introduced to the tribe, the rebels still seemed powerful.⁵⁸ Cape Town, alleged George Moshesh, did not adequately protect loyal Basutos, who had to submit to the rebels. Loyalists could not

⁵³ B.S.P., (1881), LXVII, 620, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, June 30, 1881.

⁵⁴ Ibid., 620, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, July 2, 1881.

⁵⁵ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 525; Theal, South Africa, XI, 71.

⁵⁶ Theal, South Africa, XI, 70-71.

⁵⁷ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 172, 176; Brookes also maintains that Griffith feigned his illness, Brookes, History of Native Policy, p. 104.

⁵⁸ B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 200, ltr. Sauer to Scanlen, August 29, 1881.

reclaim their homes and land,⁵⁹ and a councilor to one chief said that Loyalists had no plows or oxen to till fields and that the hostiles refused to lend such items. One Loyalist asserted that there was still no peace in the country and that Cape Town was unable to enforce the Robinson Award.⁶⁰ The rebel chiefs felt superior to the whites and ignored magistrates and their summonses, as Cape Town would not force compliance, and Orpen, because of stubborn Masupha, feared to reopen the magistracy at Tayateyaneng.⁶¹

Secretary Sauer, with others optimistic and intent on subduing Masupha, also attended the pitso and told the natives either to coerce Masupha to submit or face direct government intervention. Events were progressing satisfactorily, believed both Orpen and Sauer,⁶² and the latter thought that Loyalists from Maseru appeared on good terms with the rebels.⁶³ The secretary, trusting Letsie to coerce Masupha, refused to personally negotiate the return of cattle with the rebel leader and judged that Masupha from his own clan and the remainder of the tribe derived no support. Paid by the Cape Government, Letsie, assumed Sauer, could "eat up" Masupha, eject him from Thaba Bosigo, and politically isolate him should that rebel resist, and should the paramount chief not restrain Masupha, Sauer warned that Basutos might not receive sanction to settle in Quthing and Matatiele Districts.⁶⁴ According to Orpen in November, Letsie probably would not act unless supported by soldiers,⁶⁵ and Smith contends

⁵⁹ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 174-75.

⁶⁰ Pall Mall Gazette (London), October 31, 1881, p. 8.

⁶¹ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, pp. 177-78.

⁶² B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 200-01, ltr. Sauer to Scanlen, August 30, 1881.

⁶³ Ibid., 200, ltr. Sauer to Scanlen, August 29, 1881.

⁶⁴ Ibid., 201, ltr. Sauer to Scanlen, August 31, 1881; Ibid., 205, ltr. Sauer to Scanlen, September 5, 1881.

⁶⁵ Ibid., 233, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, November 19, 1881.

that the tribe would not fight Masupha, because even the Loyalists respected the chief.⁶⁶ Sauer, considering the Basutos naturally indolent, waited patiently for their implementation of the Robinson Award provisions. The secretary trusted Masupha to comply with the award,⁶⁷ and the chief did rob his own clan to pay his cattle fine.⁶⁸

In that the rebels remained predominant, the Loyalists remained hapless, and some colonial officials misinterpreted the situation, Chief Joel reigned supreme in Leribe District, and, flushed with his victory in the rebellion, promised to assist Cape Town if the latter legitimized his position. Cape Colony here was rationing food to refugee loyal natives, who returned to Thlotsi Heights because of insults from their headmen and confiscation by rebels of their fields,⁶⁹ yet Orpen insisted that rebels were surrendering Loyalist cattle⁷⁰ and that all the reliable natives in the Leribe and Mhales Hoek Districts had returned home.⁷¹ Masupha, reported newly-promoted Magistrate Davies, was the most obnoxious influence in Basutoland and while at Thaba Bosigo precluded peace progress.⁷² Masupha, insisted Magistrate Bell, ruled supreme in Thaba Bosigo District, harassed loyal chiefs and headmen hitherto protected by magistrates, as conditions after the armistice had allowed no refugee Loyalists to return to Thaba Bosigo District, vowed to injure Loyalists attempting to claim their cattle, and divided Loyalist fields among his own clan. Natives

⁶⁶Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 292.

⁶⁷B.S.P., (1892), XLVII, 206, ltr. Sauer to Scanlen, September 9, 1881.

⁶⁸Ibid., 202, ltr. Sauer to Scanlen, September 2, 1881.

⁶⁹Ibid., 250, 253, ltr. Acting magistrate in Leribe District to Orpen, September 30, 1881.

⁷⁰Ibid., 217, ltr. Sauer to Scanlen, October 2, 1881.

⁷¹Ibid., 226, ltr. Sauer to Scanlen, October 17, 1881.

⁷²Ibid., 259, ltr. Davies to Orpen, November 26, 1881.

here relapsed into barbarism,⁷³ and numerous Loyalists left to work in the diamond fields. While Masupha did not follow terms of the Robinson Award, the chief, indicated Orpen, was rumoring that Scanlen had acknowledged the chief's full compliance with the award,⁷⁴ and Governor Robinson had informed the Colonial Office that Masupha had accepted all the peace conditions, which allegedly were being implemented everywhere in Basutoland.⁷⁵

Chief Magistrate Orpen, decrying further obstacles to peace, believed that Loyalist weakness and rebel resistance stemmed from outside interference which Cape Town must thwart. The rebels presumed that Cape Colony, the Orange Free State, and Great Britain were bickering over Basutoland and that, if the award failed, the colony would abandon the Loyalists; therefore, declared Orpen, the three governments must agree on one course of action. While colonial newspapers accentuated dissension in the Scanlen ministry and proposed offering sanctuary for Loyalists in Quthing and abandoning Basutoland,⁷⁶ white agitators warned the hostiles of imminent death and expropriation of rebel land.⁷⁷

Magistrate Alexander C. Bailie, who replaced Arthur Barkly at Mafeteng, in November reported further rebel illegalities, as did Magistrate Bell, who suggested remedies. Bailie deplored the soaring illegal whiskey trade around Mafeteng.⁷⁸ Rebel chiefs, argued Bell, had recovered from the hardships of their rebellion and defied Cape Town, which must use coercion to restore its rule, even though the hostiles, who refused to return more stolen Loyalist

⁷³ Ibid., 254, ltr. Bell to Orpen, October 4, 1881.

⁷⁴ Ibid., 227, ltr. Sauer to Scanlen, October 17, 1881.

⁷⁵ Pall Mall Gazette (London), September 16, 1881, p. 6.

⁷⁶ B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 233, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, November 19, 1881.

⁷⁷ Ibid., 234, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, November 29, 1881.

⁷⁸ Ibid., 261, ltr. Alexander C. Bailie to Orpen, November 29, 1881.

cattle and once again were employing passive resistance, would meet Government force with martial resistance. To sufficiently intimidate Chief Joel and other rebels and to encourage Loyalists, Magistrate Bell requested 150 more Europeans at Thlotsi Heights.⁷⁹

Chief Joel, regarding further friction in Leribe District and the reaction of the Chief Magistrate, reviled Letsie for blocking his inheritance and promoting his rival, Jonathan.⁸⁰ Orpen advised against reinforcing Thlotsi Heights and hoped that a "new impartial" magistrate would be assigned cases involving disputes over ownership of cattle,⁸¹ whereupon, Magistrate Bailie relieved the disgusted Bell.⁸²

Magistrate Surmon, commenting on rebel activities and intimidation of Loyalists in Mophales Hoek District, alleged that Lerothodi had allowed his clan to harvest Loyalist crops, had not recovered all Loyalist cattle as promised,⁸³ and only belatedly had forced rebel Tembus to return stolen Free State cattle,⁸⁴ which Surmon had not attempted to recover because of probable hostile resistance. Hostiles and Loyalists still despised each other. The former threatened natives who sought to reclaim stock, and rebel chiefs redistributed Loyalist land to their followers. Some returning district Loyalists, after receiving a sullen reception, migrated out of the country. Basutos at a pitso held to discuss war losses actually connived to aid Masupha, and all

⁷⁹ Ibid., 258, ltr. Bell to Orpen, November 30, 1881.

⁸⁰ Ibid., 237, ltr. Orpen to Molteno, December 2, 1881; Ibid., 246, ltr. Orpen to Molteno, December 10, 1881.

⁸¹ Ibid., 262, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, December 4, 1881.

⁸² Ibid., 246, ltr. Orpen to Molteno, December 11, 1881.

⁸³ Ibid., 259-60, ltr. Surmon to Orpen, November 30, 1881.

⁸⁴ Ibid., 263, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, December 23, 1881.

attending warriors carried unregistered guns.⁸⁵

Concerning the post-war situation in Quthing, Magistrate M. Clarke at Quthing reported that lands between the Telle and Silver Rivers and cattle posts further up the Orange River were occupied by Loyalist refugees. Rebels were encroaching on the inaccessible parts of northeast Quthing.⁸⁶

Secretary Sauer in December, 1881, in relation to Loyalist grievances and his consequent actions, was startled to see a Loyalist petition accusing him of inadequate help, and some trustworthy Basutos feared that the Robinson Award would unfavorably alter their position in the tribe. Sauer thereupon insisted that rebels vacate stolen land, did not force Loyalists to return home, and told loyal natives at Maseru, most of whom desired to return safely to their original homes, that they might settle in Quthing. He alleged that his actions were making more progress against the rebels than had the military campaign.⁸⁷

In December, views of colonial officials focused on how to stifle the rebels, the situation of whom observers saw differently, and how to handle the Loyalist predicament. Sauer dispatched border patrols to capture smugglers,⁸⁸ who Masupha aided.⁸⁹ Magistrate Davies angrily quit, as he believed that only a colonial army by vanquishing the rebels could restore peace.⁹⁰ Letsie and Lerothodi, according to Davies, refused to coerce Masupha, because the major-

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 259-60, ltr. Surmon to Orpen, November 30, 1881.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 267, ltr. M. Clarke, Magistrate of Quthing District, to Orpen, December 3, 1881.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, 234-36, ltr. Sauer to Scanlen, December 2, 1881.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, 237, ltr. Sauer to Scanlen, December 4, 1881.

⁸⁹ *The Times* (London), December 6, 1881, p. 5.

⁹⁰ *B.S.P.*, (1882), XLVII, 262, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, December 4, 1881.

ity of chiefs supported this rebel leader,⁹¹ however, the Chief Magistrate believed that Letsie and Lerothodi were sincere about restraining Masupha,⁹² who allegedly was on unfriendly terms with Lerothodi,⁹³ who in turn mobilized some warriors to overawe Masupha. Orpen reported that Masupha had failed to rally a force on Thaba Bosigo,⁹⁴ that the Masupha clan had dispersed,⁹⁵ that the chiefly household was quarreling,⁹⁶ and that Masupha had informed Letsie that the Masupha clan would cooperate,⁹⁷ yet Lepogo with 267 warriors joined his father to resist Letsie,⁹⁸ and Masupha, contended The Times, harbored a large band of warriors and offered to supply anyone with a gun and assegai.⁹⁹ The Chief Magistrate doubted that the rebel chief even with an armed force could withstand a siege,¹⁰⁰ and, until the neutralization of Masupha, legal cases involving cattle would take a longer time to settle.¹⁰¹ Disbelieving that the Government would feed them if they left refugee camps or would keep other promises, the Loyalists, some of whom exaggerated the rebel influence, by their attitude hampered reconciliation.¹⁰² Cape Town, though failing to encourage Loyalists, urged them to return home to Thaba Bosigo, because compensating them from the colo-

⁹¹ Ibid., 266, ltr. Davies to Orpen, December 6, 1881.

⁹² Ibid., 266, ltr. Orpen, December 11, 1881.

⁹³ The Times (London), September 20, 1881, p. 7.

⁹⁴ B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 245, ltr. Orpen to Molteno, December 7, 1881.

⁹⁵ Ibid., 246, ltr. Orpen to Molteno, December 11, 1881.

⁹⁶ Ibid., 263, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, December 23, 1881.

⁹⁷ Ibid., 247, ltr. Orpen to Molteno, December 13, 1881.

⁹⁸ Ibid., 246, ltr. Orpen to Molteno, December 10, 1881.

⁹⁹ The Times (London), January 10, 1882, p. 10.

¹⁰⁰ B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 248, ltr. Orpen to Molteno, December 15, 1881.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., 248-49, ltr. Orpen to Molteno, December 18, 1881.

¹⁰² Ibid., 247-48, ltr. Orpen to Molteno, December 13, 1881.

nial treasury was proving burdensome.¹⁰³ Chief Bareng, meanwhile, was usurping authority over the clan of George Moshesh.¹⁰⁴

Chief Magistrate Orpen, in that the Scanlen ministry failed to quash rebelliousness in the first phase of reconstruction, definitely had some influence over the Basutos. Letsie, nevertheless, easily tricked him, while Orpen, consistently accepting the excuses of the paramount chief for failing, deluded himself into considering his own methods successful.¹⁰⁵ Cape Town, on the other hand, had purposely undermined Letsie's authority because of his duplicity during the war, whereupon, his power over the entire tribe had plummeted.¹⁰⁶ Lerothodi insolently insisted on the right to grant gun licenses,¹⁰⁷ and Masupha refused to register his guns, acknowledge his magistrate, and pay taxes. Traders illegally carted brandy into Basutoland and peddled it openly to desirous chiefs, and Basutos without passes crossed over the Free State border to visit numerous Boer saloons, while the helpless magistrates could not enforce the pass law or prevent increased border raids by hostiles. Cape Colony prestige in Basutoland disappeared,¹⁰⁸ although The Times reported that most of the tribesmen and chiefs wanted peace and the return of the magistrates.¹⁰⁹

Prime Minister Scanlen, not quite realizing the true situation and wary of future alternatives and British interference, announced that his ministry did not believe the Basuto situation critical, although rebels had not abided

¹⁰³ Ibid., 245-46, ltr. Orpen to Molteno, December 7, 1881.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid., 266, ltr. Davies to Orpen, December 6, 1881.

¹⁰⁵ Theal, South Africa, XI, 71; cf., Lagden, The Basutos, II, 532.

¹⁰⁶ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 298.

¹⁰⁷ The Times (London), September 20, 1881, p. 7.

¹⁰⁸ Theal, South Africa, XI, 71-72.

¹⁰⁹ Stevens, Lesotho, etc., p. 28.

¹¹⁰ The Times (London), September 20, 1881, p. 7.

by the award, mostly because of Masupha. If Chiefs Letsie and Lerothodi failed, the ministry by other means would enforce the award.¹¹¹ Cape Colony ultimately had the following three alternatives: 1) abandon Basutoland, 2) militarily enforce colonial authority, or 3) appeal to Great Britain to re-establish its own rule with Imperial troops. The colonial ministers disliked the first and third alternatives and, according to Robinson, dismissed hope of success unless London promised to allow Prime Minister Scanlen without restriction to handle binding peace terms with the rebels; otherwise, Cape Colony would make no heavy sacrifices.¹¹²

In appraisal of the first phase of reconstruction, Cape Town should have cancelled the Robinson Award immediately after initial rebel intransigence, because the hostiles refused to comply with some terms, only partially complied with others, and promised to but did not fulfill other conditions. Rebel belief in their supreme position was the major obstacle to peace. Moral force, as had repeated Griffith at an earlier date, was useless against the Basuto tribe, and Cape Colony used this policy too long in reconstruction. The weak policy made it appear that the rebels had won the war and enhanced their tribal position. No actual reconstruction of the country occurred. Magistrates had little power; the more intelligent hard-line magistrates quit in disgust over the impotent reconstruction policy. Robinson, Sauer, and Orpen all were overoptimistic and misunderstood rebel motives, and the Secretary for Native Affairs should have negotiated directly with the fearsome Masupha. The sanctioning of Loyalist emigration to Quthing, and the partial abandonment of loyal natives, evidenced the timid Scanlen ministry approach. Exile and disposses-

¹¹¹ B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 264-65, ltr. Scanlen, December 29, 1881.

¹¹² Ibid., 242, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, December 29, 1881.

sion seemed the reward for native loyalty. Orpen unfairly censured the Loyalist attitude, which he unintentionally helped formulate.

RECONSTRUCTION: SECOND PHASE

The futile colonial efforts during the first phase of reconstruction carried over into the second phase. Chiefs Lerothodi and Joel, in the January, 1882, Basuto expedition planned by Orpen against Thaba Bosigo, assembled their warriors and began to march.¹¹³ Though native public feeling was amenable to such a solution and thought Masupha would not resist,¹¹⁴ Letsie vacillated,¹¹⁵ and Loyalist Jonathan, contending that other chiefs unanimously supported Masupha,¹¹⁶ refused to join the expedition.¹¹⁷ Tribesmen around Thaba Bosigo joined the expedition as it neared its objective, and Masupha, having begged Letsie for leniency,¹¹⁸ by the time the expedition had climbed Thaba Bosigo nonetheless had moved his cattle northward.¹¹⁹

Orpen, in investigation of and consequent to the useless expedition, retained only about one-third of his force after¹²⁰ the others, fearing reprisals, fled to Masupha.¹²¹ The Times thought that all the military preparation by Ma-

¹¹³ Ibid., 270, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, January 4, 1882.

¹¹⁴ Ibid., 271, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, January 10, 1882.

¹¹⁵ Ibid., 271, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, January 11, 1882.

¹¹⁶ The Times (London), February 10, 1882, p. 3.

¹¹⁷ Editorial, New York Times, February 11, 1882, p. 4.

¹¹⁸ B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 272, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, January 14, 1882.

¹¹⁹ Ibid., 274-75, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, January 16, 1882.

¹²⁰ Editorial, New York Times, February 11, 1882, p. 4.

¹²¹ B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 275, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, January 18, 1882.

supha merely allowed Letsie to defy the Cape Government¹²² and that the rebel chief probably had agreed to allow Letsie to scale Thaba Bosigo.¹²³ On January 19, Orpen admitted that Letsie, mouthing "empty froth,"¹²⁴ had shown the cowardice that mostly caused failure for the expedition.¹²⁵ The Chief Magistrate thereupon suggested that other natives pay the fine of Masupha. Though Orpen ordered Chief Letsie to seize the cattle herded away by Masupha, Letsie would not advance unless his sons, some of whom were still in league with Masupha, and others accompanied him,¹²⁶ and the paramount chief later refused to attack Masupha.¹²⁷ Though the failure of the January expedition had disgraced Basutos,¹²⁸ the loyal chiefs complained of the prolonged hostilities and refused to combat Masupha.¹²⁹

The Chief Magistrate, lashing out and suggesting further action, condemned Basuto chiefs who collaborated with white troublemakers. He could not tell Lerothodi or Joel what, if any, Government assistance to expect should the chiefs fail to subdue Masupha.¹³⁰ He insisted that, with a resolute policy from Cape Town, he could subdue Masupha in three weeks with only natives, that another expedition, for which the rebels would have to eventually pay, would attract to it Loyalists seeking to reclaim their property, and that declarations

¹²²The Times (London), January 10, 1882, p. 10.

¹²³Ibid., January 25, 1882, p. 5.

¹²⁴Lagden, The Basutos, II, 526.

¹²⁵B.S.P., (1883), XLIX: "Further Correspondence Respecting the Cape Colony and Adjacent Territories," 12, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, January 22, 1882.

¹²⁶B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 275-76, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, January 18, 1882.

¹²⁷The Times (London), January 30, 1882, p. 6.

¹²⁸B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 32, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February 4, 1882.

¹²⁹Ibid., 49, ltr. Loyal chiefs to Orpen, February 8, 1882.

¹³⁰B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 276-77, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, January 19, 1882.

of support from London and the Orange Free State would prevent renewed fighting.¹³¹ Orpen still believed it wiser to allow Letsie rather than regular troops to coerce Masupha.¹³²

Governor Robinson, moreover, reporting new Scanlen ministry proposals in the face of British hindrance, informed Lord Kimberley that British restrictions on Cape Colony, with which the rebels were acquainted, prohibited the colonial ministry from submitting to the Cape Parliament a proposal for possible renewal of hostilities. Regarding the present situation as intolerable, the ministry therefore offered to the Cape Parliament the following suggestions: 1) abandonment of Basutoland north of the Orange River, 2) repeal of the Basutoland Annexation Act of 1871, and 3) satisfaction of Loyalist claims by land grants in Quthing, which would remain an integral portion of Cape Colony, and elsewhere, together with colonial compensation for their losses. The effect of withdrawing colonial rule over Basutoland, especially the effect on Basuto-Free State relations, weighed on the ministers, however, to uphold authority was impossible while rebels believed themselves protected from the consequences of their rebellion,¹³³ and the ministry believed useless further attempts to assert in Basutoland rule which the governor was forbidden to enforce or to burden itself with the expenses of maintaining order under severely restricted responsible government.¹³⁴

Lord Kimberley, disagreeing with some of the proposals, advised Robinson not to withdraw colonial rule from Basutoland, because London would not res-

¹³¹ B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 12-13, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, January 22, 1882.

¹³² Ibid., 32, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February 4, 1882.

¹³³ B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 268, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, January 25, 1882.

¹³⁴ Theal, South Africa, XI, 72-73.

tore order north of the Orange River, and because abandonment would endanger the security of other South African Bantu, cause problems with the Orange Free State, and nullify the colonial efforts to civilize the Basutos.¹³⁵

Governor Robinson, in the revision of colonial policy and with only partial British cooperation, reported that after his ministers had confiscated all of the territory south of the Orange River, proceeds from the disposal of nothing as waste Crown land would compensate Loyalists, traders, and others. North of the Orange River, Cape Town would confiscate land of the rebellious and reluctantly enforce the law, as otherwise, in subsequent fighting, the Free State would annihilate the Basutos. The Scanlen ministry asked the Home Government to allow just colonial punishment for Basuto offenses,¹³⁶ but Kimberley agreed only to possible cancellation of the Robinson Award,¹³⁷ followed by punishment of offenders by reasonable confiscation, and did not grant freedom of action to Cape Town, which therefore could not force the Basutos to obey.¹³⁸

Objections attended to forced Basuto collective acceptance of the Robinson Award and its deadline on March 15.¹³⁹ Loyal chiefs affirmed their acceptance of the award and alleged that Robinson ignored their advice.¹⁴⁰ The ultimatum, announced Magistrate Bailie, made Letsie disconsolate.¹⁴¹ The Chief Magistrate complained that this short notice seemed impractical in the con-

¹³⁵ B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 268-69, ltr. Kimberley to Robinson, February 2, 1882; cf., Theal, South Africa, XI, 58.

¹³⁶ B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 273, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, February 6, 1882; cf., B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 25, ltr. Scanlen, February 6, 1882.

¹³⁷ B.S.P., (1882), XLVII, 268, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, February 2, 1882; Ibid., 274, ltr. Kimberley to Robinson, February 9, 1882.

¹³⁸ Theal, South Africa, XI, 74.

¹³⁹ B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 37-38, ltr. Sauer to Orpen, February 13, 1882.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., 49, ltr. Loyal chiefs to Orpen, February 8, 1882.

¹⁴¹ Ibid., 40, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February 17, 1882.

fused tribal situation, in which the only viable tribal government consisted of a few desperate rebel leaders who jealously commanded a factious mob and who could not enforce the award; some either refused obedience outright or slyly hid their spoils.¹⁴² Although pleading that the tribe feared other alternatives, Orpen received no extension for the ultimatum.¹⁴³

While the Chief Magistrate, faced with the possibility of militarily handling the crisis, noted that the deteriorating situation might soon necessitate the recall of small garrisons from Basutoland via the Orange Free State, which probably would not allow more troops passage after this withdrawal because of anger in the Volksraad over the Basuto situation,¹⁴⁴ a military predicament would arise if the Free State did not furnish a troop corridor. As the Basutos were as resolute against confiscation as disarmament, Orpen wanted to evacuate all the magistrates from Basutoland before troops entered the territory in force¹⁴⁵ and evacuate all whites, Loyalists, and ammunition from Mafeteng, which he believed an untenable position.¹⁴⁶ Moving forward a regiment of Imperial troops would restore confidence and quash Masupha, and Jonathan approved of dispatching Loyalists to Berea Mountain to act as a military reserve.¹⁴⁷ Cape Town use of armed force to reorganize and protect the tribe, said the Chief Magistrate, would cause opposition to vanish without inordinate expense or risk and seemed the only method to gain Loyalist support.¹⁴⁸

¹⁴² Ibid., 38, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February 15, 1882.

¹⁴³ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 532.

¹⁴⁴ B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 38, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February 16, 1882.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid., 40, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February 18, 1882.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid., 41, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February 18, 1882.

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., 41, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February, 1882.

¹⁴⁸ Ibid., 38, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February 15, 1882.

In addition, as the noxious "Mabille Ring" in this dire crisis again meddled, the reverend Mabille supposedly asked Masupha to surrender,¹⁴⁹ advocated ejection from Basutoland of whites who incited violence,¹⁵⁰ and allegedly aided the position of Orpen.¹⁵¹ All the chiefs, according to Mabille, feared that abandonment would lead to their fighting the Orange Free State. The pastor condemned the proposed confiscation of Quthing and rebel land and suggested a policy of patience. He considered the award successfully completed but disliked the compensation provision.¹⁵² Still assuming that Basutoland was a directly-ruled British possession, the PES in July, 1882, requested London to have elected a Cape Parliament which would accomplish the Basuto reconstruction and to allow the French missionaries to halt the liquor traffic and again teach school.¹⁵³

As affairs further degenerated, war became imminent except in Leribe District. The hostiles, willing to die to retain their ancestral property and believing that the Queen wanted a resumption of hostilities, again contrived to rebel against the unprepared Cape Colony.¹⁵⁴ While Masupha was fighting Joel for paying the hut tax¹⁵⁵ and was urging Basutos to fight,¹⁵⁶ Chief Mama and other chiefs operated saloons in their villages and were not permitting officials to fine liquor smugglers. Magistrates were unprepared to repel assaults,¹⁵⁷ and

¹⁴⁹ Ibid., 40, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February 18, 1882.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., 63, ltr. Mabille to Sauer, March 25, 1882.

¹⁵¹ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 179.

¹⁵² B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 55, ltr. Mabille to Sauer, March 12, 1882.

¹⁵³ Ibid., 82, ltr. PES to Colonial Office, July 5, 1882.

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., 43, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February 23, 1882.

¹⁵⁵ The Times (London), April 1, 1882, p. 7.

¹⁵⁶ B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 52, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, March 5, 1882.

¹⁵⁷ The Times (London), March 20, 1882, p. 5.

Chief Jonathan was placed in "protective custody."¹⁵⁸

Furthermore, land speculators told the Basutos not to trust the colony or pay fines,¹⁵⁹ and rambunctious whites from disbanded irregular army units promoted renewed conflict by intriguing and influencing the press against the Scanlen ministry. The Opposition in the Cape Parliament used the anarchy to undermine the ministry¹⁶⁰ and ridiculed Scanlen and Sauer as negrophiles.¹⁶¹

Regarding new ex-rebel initiatives and the criticism by Orpen of colonial policy facing the odious outlook, Chief Lerothodi maintained that only punishing the recalcitrant by fines could restore control¹⁶² and sought Government support for himself to coerce Masupha without confiscation. Chief Letsie, who stalled for more time, desired support from Imperial troops.¹⁶³ Orpen wanted to revoke the confiscation orders¹⁶⁴ but discouraged further amnesty. The Robinson Award, he maintained, was unconstitutional, recognized colonial power that did not exist, and enforced taxes strange to the tribe.¹⁶⁵ Some chiefs obviously with reservations had accepted the award, others had accepted unwillingly or under duress, and some like Masupha, gaining sympathy and help from other chiefs all the while, had awaited the first opportunity to resist the award.¹⁶⁶ He refused to respect Letsie, appeared mentally deranged,¹⁶⁷ and later informed

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., April 1, 1882, p. 7.

¹⁵⁹ B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 45, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February 27, 1882.

¹⁶⁰ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 529.

¹⁶¹ Theal, South Africa, XI, 73.

¹⁶² B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 46, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February 28, 1882.

¹⁶³ Ibid., 46, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, March 1, 1882; Ibid., 45, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, February 27, 1882.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid., 51, ltr. Letsie to Orpen, March 6, 1882.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid., 58, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, March 15, 1882.

¹⁶⁶ Editorial, New York Times, February 11, 1882.

¹⁶⁷ B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 69, ltr. Deputy-Acting Chief Magistrate to Sauer, April 17, 1882.

a delegation of Letsie, Lerothodi, Mama, and Mabile that he would make peace but not pay his hut tax, after which the delegation denounced him.¹⁶⁸ All the Basuto chiefs felt confident of subduing Masupha with only the help of the magistrates.¹⁶⁹

Frustrated Prime Minister Scanlen, in new steps, disavowed confiscation of land and renewed hostilities except as reluctant and remote alternatives. A commission would investigate Loyalist grievances and the advisability of both Basuto local self-government and their representation in the Cape Parliament.¹⁷⁰ For allegedly showing cowardice in these latest steps, the Cape Argus condemned the ministry.¹⁷¹ Climaxing this period of reconstruction, Scanlen cancelled the Robinson Award and repealed the PPA on April 6 and determined to colonize Quthing with whites and abandon the remainder of Basutoland.¹⁷² Nevertheless, while the Legislative Council at Cape Town voted 14-6 to repeal the Basutoland Annexation Act,¹⁷³ the House Assembly by a 34-23 vote rejected abandonment,¹⁷⁴ and London refused to relieve Cape Colony of Basuto responsibility.¹⁷⁵

Concerning alleviation of Loyalists and further misconduct by rebels after these announcements, though Chief Jonathan in May ejected a rebel wardmaster from Leribe District and redistributed rebel land to Loyalists,¹⁷⁶ and although

¹⁶⁸ Ibid., 71, ltr. Deputy-Acting Chief Magistrate to Sauer, April 19, 1882.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid., 71-72, ltr. Deputy-Acting Chief Magistrate to Sauer, April 19, 1882.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., 44, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, March 28, 1882.

¹⁷¹ The Times (London), March 30, 1882, p. 5.

¹⁷² Walker, ed., South Africa, p. 491; Theal, South Africa, XI, 74.

¹⁷³ B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 65, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, May 4, 1882; cf., The Times (London), May 4, 1882, p. 7.

¹⁷⁴ The Times (London), May 10, 1882, p. 7.

¹⁷⁵ B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 65, ltr. Kimberley to Robinson, May 6, 1882.

Lerothodi reassigned village rights to Loyalists,¹⁷⁷ George Moshesh collected 100 loyal Basutos to migrate to Matatiele. Cape Colony already had settled Loyalist refugees from Mafeteng and Mhales Hoek elsewhere.¹⁷⁸ Disgusted natives detested such chiefly tyranny as the embezzlement by Chiefs Bereng and Mama of most of the hut tax paid these chiefs.¹⁷⁹ Masupha in June overran the village of Loyalist Chief Sofonia.¹⁸⁰ Letsie, who wanted colonial protection without loss of more independence, secretly encouraged Masupha.

As Basuto magistrates watched helplessly, a year-long cattle and inheritance conflict erupted between Chiefs Jonathan and Joel in November, 1882.¹⁸¹ Numerous Basuto refugees fled into the Orange Free State, whose inhabitants they aggravated, and the rival clans destroyed villages, stole cattle, and engaged in armed clashes.¹⁸² Masupha threatened Jonathan so seriously that the latter abandoned most of Leribe District,¹⁸³ and in May, 1883, President Brand refused to allow Jonathan to herd cattle, many of which were diseased or stolen, into Boer territory.¹⁸⁴ Basuto magistrates, according to Chief Magistrate Orpen,

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., 77, ltr. Deputy-Acting Chief Magistrate to Sauer, May 17, 1882.

¹⁷⁷ Ibid., 81, ltr. Deputy-Acting Chief Magistrate to Sauer, May 29, 1882.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid., 92, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, July 2, 1882.

¹⁷⁹ Ibid., 81, ltr. Deputy-Acting Chief Magistrate to Sauer, May 29, 1882.

¹⁸⁰ Ibid., 91, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, July 2, 1882.

¹⁸¹ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 562, 537-38; cf., Theal, South Africa, XI, 78; cf., B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 115, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, December 21, 1882.

¹⁸² B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 104-05, 108, 110-14, 150-53, 167; B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 356, ltr. Chief Magistrate Matthew S. Blyth to Sauer, May 20, 1883; cf., Lagden, The Basutos, II, 538-39, 543; cf., Theal, South Africa, XI, 78; cf., Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 182.

¹⁸³ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 539.

¹⁸⁴ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 349, ltr. Brand to Blyth, May 17, 1883.

deserted Jonathan and advocated abandonment of Basutoland.¹⁸⁵

The Scanlen ministry, in conclusion, still treating the rebels too leniently, neither could expect tribal self-government in view of divisiveness and anarchy in the tribe and colonial abandonment of Loyalists nor could seek to employ British troops without accepting more British interference. Chief Magistrate Orpen did not realize for too long, and the Loyalists with justification detested, the futility of using a "Basuto against Basuto" method to bring peace. The rebels were still as rebellious as before the war and waited for exasperation to undermine Cape rule. Lerothodi aided reconstruction only because he feared the paramountcy of Masupha. Ignorant Pastor Mabile betrayed the Loyalists.

British interference with the restoration of strict colonial rule made Cape Town weary of Basuto responsibilities and eager to find a simple, if expedient solution. Lord Kimberley restricted colonial options yet unfairly expected Cape Colony to handle the necessary responsibility and control over the Basutos.

"CHINESE" GORDON AND BASUTO RECONSTRUCTION

Colonel Charles G. Gordon, who came to Cape Colony on a military mission in 1881, had produced a plan for the reorganization of and economization in the Cape army, a plan never accepted¹⁸⁶ because of opposition by Prime Minister Scanlen.¹⁸⁷ Scanlen on March 3, 1882, contacted Gordon about the reconstruction

¹⁸⁵ B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 163, Annual Report of Chief Magistrate Orpen for 1882, January 12, 1883.

¹⁸⁶ Archibald Forbes, Chinese Gordon (New York: John B. Alden, 1884), p. 185.

situation in Basutoland and requested his assistance.¹⁸³ The Scanlen ministry, alleges Tylden, wanted to shift some of its Basuto responsibility onto Gordon.¹⁸⁹

"Chinese" Gordon, in his initial views of the Basuto crisis, denounced London for allowing Cape Colony to annex Basutoland¹⁹⁰ and contended that the Basutos had unjustly lost land notwithstanding treaties of guarantee and had lost rights. After a colonial commission examined Loyalist claims, Gordon wanted the Imperial Government to pay indemnity to Loyalists at a tribal pitso in order to rid Cape Colony of one burden.¹⁹¹ Scanlen ignored these suggestions. An admirer of the Basuto tribe, Colonel Gordon believed that the Cape Government was trying to sow dissension among the chiefs in order to stifle them.¹⁹² From Basutoland he wanted immediately to withdraw military forces and magistrates, leaving only three officials to advise the chiefs.¹⁹³ To maintain troops in Basutoland was too expensive, and the Orange Free State could block the only line of retreat. Though isolated garrisons, in the opinion of Gordon, could offer little resistance to the Basutos,¹⁹⁴ Scanlen expected a large

¹⁸⁷ H. E. Wortham, Chinese Gordon (Boston: Little, Brown, and Co., 1933), p. 286.

¹⁸⁸ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 215, ltr. Scanlen to Colonel Charles Gordon, March 3, 1882; cf., Forbes, Chinese Gordon, pp. 183-84; cf., Wortham, Chinese Gordon, p. 285.

¹⁸⁹ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 180.

¹⁹⁰ B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 77, ltr. Gordon to Scanlen, May 26, 1882.

¹⁹¹ Ibid., 78-79, ltr. Gordon, May 26, 1882; cf., Wortham, Chinese Gordon, p. 286.

¹⁹² Wortham, Chinese Gordon, p. 287. De Kiewiet believes that colonial officials, in order to crush the tribe, secretly wanted to escalate the rivalry between Lerothodi and Masupha into another civil war, De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p. 290.

¹⁹³ Brookes, History of Native Policy, p. 105.

¹⁹⁴ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 220-21, ltr. Gordon to Molteno, June 1, 1882.

Basuto war in the future and intended to refortify Basuto magistracies.¹⁹⁵ Gordon in July planned to visit Basutoland under the guise of inspecting the remaining troops in order to make peace with Masupha.¹⁹⁶

Regarding the initial reception, ideas, and warnings of Gordon upon his arrival in Basutoland on September 2, 1882, he bewildered, then angered officials. Secretary for Native Affairs Sauer, Orpen, Gordon, Magistrate Rolland, the Reverend Mabile, Letsie, Lerothodi, Mama, Tsekelo, Nehemiah, and other chiefs attended a pitso at Morija on September 16. Sauer insisted that Basutos act peacefully, obey their magistrates, and pay their hut tax. He berated Letsie for not controlling his sons or explaining disorder but endorsed the new military stance of the paramount chief against Masupha. Gordon explained his own desire to make peace and advised that Cape Town would crush Masupha if that chief resisted.¹⁹⁷ Basutos in thousands converged on the pitso to meet "Chinese" Gordon,¹⁹⁸ and, although he told the tribesmen of his auxiliary role under Sauer, the natives regarded Gordon as of superior rank and ignored the Secretary for Native Affairs.¹⁹⁹ Colonel Gordon criticized Cape Town for not motivating the paramount chief and believed that Lerothodi would assume an attitude like that of Masupha if the former crushed the rebel chief. The colonel sought to end the rivalry between Lerothodi and Masupha. In a future Basuto war, Cape Colony would have to fight embittered Loyalists; thus, Gordon cautioned that Cape Town, to pacify the tribe, not press Letsie to attack Masupha, replace all Basuto magistrates, allow Basuto police to replace the CMR garrisons, and allow

¹⁹⁵ Ibid., 247, ltr. Scanlen to Gordon, August 7, 1882.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid., 234, ltr. Gordon to Molteno, July 19, 1882.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid., 289-91, Pitso at Morija Mission Station, September 16, 1882.

¹⁹⁸ Sir Lewis Michell, The Life of the Rt. Hon. Cecil John Rhodes, I (London: Edward Arnold, 1910), p. 135. Hereafter cited as Michell, Rhodes.

¹⁹⁹ Lockhart and Woodhouse, Cecil Rhodes, p. 77.

the tribe internal self-government.²⁰⁰ Colonel Gordon, according to Smith, considered the Basutos as persecuted "dear black lambs of the Savior." Alleging that Chief Magistrate Urpen evoked almost no confidence from the Basutos,²⁰¹ Gordon suggested the removal of the chief magistrate.²⁰²

"Chinese" Gordon, next visiting Chief Masupha atop Thaba Bosigo, voiced unwillingness there to fight the tribe and promised not to incite other chiefs against Masupha. The colony, said Gordon, would allow the Boers to overrun Basutoland if the tribe refused to pay its taxes.²⁰³ The chief stalled.²⁰⁴

As the conduct of Gordon and colonial officials alienated each other, Secretary Sauer relieved him from the Basuto mission.²⁰⁵ Gordon simultaneously quit all his duties²⁰⁶ over the objections of Sauer.²⁰⁷ Believing the Gordon position not conducive to the colonial welfare, Prime Minister Scanlen gladly accepted the resignation.²⁰⁸ According to Sauer, Gordon had offered Masupha better terms than the Government had promised.²⁰⁹ Colonel Gordon, in turn, denied

²⁰⁰ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 294-95, ltr. Gordon, September 19, 1882; cf., Ibid., 235-36, Convention between the Cape of Good Hope and Chiefs and People of Basutoland; De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p. 290; cf., Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 311.

²⁰¹ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 310, 314.

²⁰² Lagden, The Basutos, II, 534.

²⁰³ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 296-97, ltr. Gordon to Masupha, September 25, 1882; cf., De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p. 290.

²⁰⁴ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 298, Meeting of Gordon with Masupha, September 26, 1882.

²⁰⁵ Ibid., 300, ltr. Arthur Garcia, Inspector-General of the War Department, to Sauer, September 27, 1882.

²⁰⁶ Ibid., 300, ltr. Gordon to Sauer, September 27, 1882; cf., Forbes, Chinese Gordon, p. 187.

²⁰⁷ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 301, ltr. Sauer to Gordon, September 28, 1882.

²⁰⁸ Ibid., 302, ltr. Scanlen to Gordon, October 5, 1882.

²⁰⁹ Ibid., 299, ltr. Sauer to Garcia, September 26, 1882.

that Sauer had a set policy or that the secretary had given him written instructions which limited negotiations²¹⁰ but later admitted to purposely disregarding Government orders and acting on his own initiative.²¹¹ Gordon, contends Lagden, improperly consulted the French missionaries, was ignorant of Basuto affairs, and sent notes to Masupha which compromised the Cape position. The meeting between Gordon and Masupha angered Lerothodi, the royal heir-apparent,²¹² who, with Secretary Sauer, in the meantime had led an armed force to crush Masupha. Cowardly attendant chiefs, however, caused the expedition to fail.²¹³ Though Sauer, felt Gordon, had betrayed him by disavowing warlike intentions and then marching against Masupha, the colonel offered to remain as magistrate with Masupha for two years.²¹⁴ While Sauer was alleged to have consented reluctantly, Gordon indicated that the secretary had persuaded him to visit Masupha. Smith condemns Secretary Sauer for launching an assault on Masupha before realizing the results of the Gordon visit but denies that this strategy endangered the colonel, who received notification.²¹⁵ Masupha, according to one author, did not kill Gordon for suspected treachery, despite advice to the contrary,²¹⁶ but another author reveals a threat by the chief to murder the colonel.²¹⁷ Chief

²¹⁰ Ibid., 303, ltr. Gordon to Scanlen, October 11, 1882.

²¹¹ Ibid., 308, ltr. Gordon to Scanlen, October 16, 1882; cf., Theal, South Africa, XI, 76.

²¹² Lagden, The Basutos, II, 534-35; cf., B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 303, Memorandum of Hook, October 16, 1882.

²¹³ Theal, South Africa, XI, 75; cf., Wortham, Chinese Gordon, p. 287; cf., Lord Godfrey Elton, Gordon of Khartoum (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1955), p. 255.

²¹⁴ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 306, 308, ltr. Gordon to Molteno, October 8, 1882.

²¹⁵ Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 311-12.

²¹⁶ Sir William F. Butler, Charles George Gordon (London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1899), p. 183.

Magistrate Orpen later warned Gordon to stop interfering in the renewed fighting between Jonathan and Joel.²¹⁸ Cape Town, despite this friction, later incorporated Gordon proposals to support Lerothodi and isolate Masupha.²¹⁹

The Government, in reflection, from the beginning thwarted and compromised the position of Gordon, who, although he intelligently sought to bargain with the supreme Masupha, wanted Cape Town to capitulate to the rebels and abandon Loyalists.

THE BASUTOLAND LOSSES COMMISSION

In handling the prolonged predicament of white traders in Basutoland, who had resided under the control of Basuto chiefs since the end of the war and had made little profit,²²⁰ the Scanlen ministry on July 24, 1882, appointed²²¹ a four-member Basutoland Losses Commission, which included Colonel Charles Griffith²²² and Cecil Rhodes, to investigate wartime losses of Loyalists and white traders. The commission subsequently recommended payment of £104,156 to Loyalists and £42,316 to the traders,²²³ after traveling to Maseru, Thlotsi Heights, Mafeteng, Mοhales Hoek, and Alwyn's Kop, and the deputation on May 16, 1883, made its recommendations to Governor Robinson. Rhodes, in a minority report,

²¹⁷ Lawrence and Elizabeth Hanson, Chinese Gordon (New York: Funk & Wagnalls Company, 1954), p. 175.

²¹⁸ B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 107, ltr. Orpen to Sauer, December 2, 1882.

²¹⁹ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 181.

²²⁰ Ibid., pp. 183-84.

²²¹ Michell, Rhodes, II, 132.

²²² Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 303.

²²³ Theal, South Africa, XI, 74-75.

objected to proposals for compensation to traders. Traders, he continued, in native wars always had undergone hardships, and their military and material aid in the rebellion did not warrant reimbursement, because Prime Minister Sprigg had not guaranteed compensation to traders who sustained losses in the war zone, and because other states in such circumstances had not compensated merchants.²²⁴ Rhodes prevailed; the traders received no indemnification.²²⁵

As these traders, in impartial appraisal, helped maintain order and offered protection until colonial troops arrived to handle the rebellion, the merchants deserved reimbursement, and Cape Town shamefully abandoned them once more to the mercy of Basuto chiefs.

²²⁴Michell, Rhodes, II, 137-40; cf., Williams, Rhodes, p. 64.

²²⁵Williams, Rhodes, p. 64.

CHAPTER VII

BASUTOLAND REVERTS TO BRITISH RULE

De Kiewiet, in that temperament persisted in Cape Colony to relegate more Basuto obligations, believes that Cape Town wanted to disannex Basutoland, because London had prohibited colonial farmers from seizing rebel land, and because Basutoland traders only under British protection could regain native customers.¹ As early as May, 1881, a motion in the colonial legislature had called for the disannexation of Basutoland, and another had proposed the Imperial takeover of that territory.² When in the January, 1883, Cape Parliamentary session, the Scanlen ministry, having been rebuffed in 1882, proposed that Cape Colony unilaterally abandon responsibility for the internal government of Basutoland and only retain control of Basuto external affairs because of responsibility to the Orange Free State,³ the legislature accepted the proposal.⁴

As Cape Town sought to apply its new system of management over Basuto affairs, on March 17, 1883, Captain Matthew Smith Blyth⁵ replaced Joseph Orpen as Chief Magistrate, an action necessitated by the change in colonial policy. To Basutoland traveled both Prime Minister Scanlen and Secretary Sauer to secure peace, and at Matsieng and Thlotsi Heights they held pitsos in order to sample

¹De Kiewiet, The Imperial Factor, p. 291.

²B.S.P., (1881), LXVII, 614, ltr. Robinson to Kimberley, May 22, 1881.

³B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 117, ltr. Robinson to the Earl of Derby, January 19, 1883; cf., Lagden, The Basutos, II, 540; cf., Theal, South Africa, XI, 76.

⁴Lagden, The Basutos, II, 540.

⁵S.A.D.N.B., p. 32. Blyth: Born in Norfolk, England, Blyth joined the British Army, served in the Indian Mutiny and in the West Indies, and fought in Cape Colony frontier campaigns until his retirement in 1866. He later became a British magistrate in Fingoland, Griqualand East, and Transkei.

Basuto opinion. While Masupha and his supporters ignored the pitsos, Letsie and his upholders attended, complained about abandonment, and requested Imperial rule.⁶ After numerous indecisive pitsos and much patience, Scanlen threatened to abandon all Basuto responsibilities if the tribe did not act orderly and accept the following terms: 1) a constitution to govern the tribe, 2) a council of just and humane chiefs and headmen to administer internal self-government, 3) the judgement of civil and criminal cases involving only whites by the chief magistrate, 4) the judgement of cases involving whites and Basutos and murder cases by magistrates and chiefs, 5) the expenditure in the country of all Basuto tax money, 6) reduction of the £1 hut tax to 10s. if the council and economy would permit, and 7) the inclusion of Quthing District in Basutoland. On April 25, at a national pitso held by Blyth to obtain an answer to the conditions, Letsie accepted, but the absent Masupha insulted the Chief Magistrate,⁷ other chiefs ignored the terms, and one-third of the tribe remained recalcitrant; thus, the Scanlen mission failed.⁸ Although Pastor Mabile urged acceptance of the terms and condemned Masupha,⁹ according to Chief Magistrate Blyth, Basutoland was financially bankrupt, and Cape Colony by setting chief against chief had alienated the tribe.¹⁰

The Scanlen ministry, regarding the British reaction to the colonial desire to hand over Basutoland to Imperial rule, sent John X. Merriman, in his

⁶Theal, South Africa, XI, 77; cf., Lagden, The Basutos, II, 541.

⁷Lagden, The Basutos, II, 541-42; cf., Theal, South Africa, XI, 77; cf., Ashton, The Basuto, pp. 217-18; cf., Brookes, History of Native Policy, p. 105.

⁸Theal, South Africa, XI, 77-78; cf., B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 149, ltr. Blyth to Sauer, April 25, 1883.

⁹Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 315.

¹⁰B.S.P., (1883), XLIX, 148, ltr. Blyth to Sauer, April 7, 1883.

capacity as Commissioner of Crown Lands and Public Works, to England,¹¹ where he suggested that the Imperial Government administer all native dependencies of Cape Colony and that this colony and Natal help enforce the law.¹² The Earl of Derby, having succeeded Kimberley at the Colonial Office, warned that Cape Town would have to furnish officials and pay Basuto customs duties to the High Commissioner. Though at first he agreed to only temporary British control of Basuto obligations,¹³ Derby on June 4 told the British Parliament of his fear that anarchy in Basutoland would spread to other native districts and did not want to expel the tribe from the British Empire just because the Basutos presented a problem. Cape Town and the tribe, he added, would pay for most of the alteration in rule, and Basutos would enjoy internal self-government.¹⁴ Merriman, because Cape Colony on British-condoned Basuto policy already had spent vast sums, balked at the British stipulations.¹⁵

British sanction received, the Cape Parliament on June 27, 1883, formally disannexed Basutoland, thereby provoking dissatisfaction.¹⁶ Cecil Rhodes on July 18 spoke in the House Assembly against Basuto home rule, which he believed would further anarchy and alienate the Orange Free State.¹⁷ The conservative

¹¹ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 323, Scanlen minute, April 30, 1883.

¹² Ibid., 338, Merriman memorandum; cf., Brookes, History of Native Policy, pp. 105-06.

¹³ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 341, ltr. Derby to Acting-Governor L. Smyth, June, 1883; cf., Theal, South Africa, XI, 78; cf., Lagden, The Basutos, II, 551; cf., Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 318.

¹⁴ Hansard, 3rd ser., Vol. 280 (1883), 522-24, Earl of Derby speaking, June 14, 1883.

¹⁵ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 343, ltr. Merriman to Colonial Office, June 11, 1883.

¹⁶ Theal, South Africa, XI, 79.

¹⁷ Vindex, Cecil Rhodes, pp. 45, 48, 50.

Afrikaner faction in the Cape Parliament deplored the spread of British authority in South Africa, especially in Basutoland. Jan Hofmeyr so virulently opposed disannexation that he plotted, though unsuccessfully, with the Free State to overrun Basutoland so that Boers could seize farmland and extend their influence in South Africa.¹⁸ A native administration in Basutoland was repugnant to Hofmeyr, whose faction became dominant in the newly-elected Parliament and ultimately caused the fall of the Scanlen ministry.¹⁹

The Colonial Office in November, 1883, with admonition from within, listed the conditions under which Britain would manage Basutoland. The tribe would have to acknowledge British rule, pay taxes, and obey the laws and commands of the High Commissioner, and the Orange Free State would have to promise not to allow raids into Basutoland and to arrest by itself Basutos who committed crimes in Boer territory. Cape Town would have to pay in quarterly installments to London £20,000 annually for Basuto administration, provide 2 or 3 magistrates at a total cost of £5,000 a year to help the High Commissioner, and pay a mounted police force about £15,000 annually.²⁰ Governor Robinson, however, counseled Lord Derby that Cape Town must provide at least £20,000 and the tribe £10,000 a year for Basuto administration, £20,000 for the police, and £5,000 for the jails.²¹

Chief Letsie, in the tribal reaction to the British offer, called a national pitso on November 29, 1883,²² where Acting-Governor L. Smyth informed the

¹⁸Williams, Cecil Rhodes, p. 66; New York Times, August 10, 1883, p. 6; cf., Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, p. 313.

¹⁹Smith, The Mabilles of Basutoland, pp. 313, 319.

²⁰B.S.P., (1884), LVI: "Further Correspondence Respecting the Cape Colony and Adjacent Territories," 544-45, ltr. Herbert to Robinson, November 12, 1883.

²¹Ibid., 546, ltr. Robinson to Herbert, November 13, 1883.

²²Ibid., 548, ltr. Smyth to Derby, November 16, 1883.

notables that London had given the tribe the choice of either reverting to British rule as proclaimed in 1868 or returning to independence. Derby in a telegram censured the tribe for its lack of gratitude and broken promises and said that, though Britain had no obligation to govern the Basutos, he feared for a Basuto future without British protection.²³ Letsie, his sons, and thirty-three other chiefs signed an agreement accepting British rule, and Chief Joel accepted belatedly. Chief Magistrate Blyth believed that Masupha, who with his followers snubbed the meeting, represented about one-third of the tribe that wanted independence,²⁴ and the chief on December 5 at his own pitso prevented from speaking those natives who desired British rule and promised to defend himself against Imperial troops.²⁵

Tribal misbehavior during the alteration in Basuto rule once again annoyed the Orange Free State in the face of British dereliction and Cape Colony indictments of Boers. Derby absolved himself of responsibility towards guarding the Basuto-Free State border as prescribed by the Treaty of Aliwal North (1869), even though the Boers captured Basuto offenders in their territory²⁶ and helped maintain order on the frontier.²⁷ Though President Brand complained about British failure to uphold the Aliwal treaty, Derby insisted that Cape Colony enforce the pact.²⁸ In April, 1883, a band of warriors threatened to

²³ Ibid., 549, ltr. Derby to Smyth, November 24, 1883; cf., Stevens, Lesotho, etc., p. 28.

²⁴ B.S.P., (1884), LVI, 551, ltr. Smyth to Derby, n.d., r. December 2, 1883; Ibid., 552, ltr. Smyth to Derby, n.d., r. December 5, 1883; cf., Theal, South Africa, XI, 79.

²⁵ B.S.P., (1884), LVI, 553, ltr. Smyth to Derby, n.d., r. December 12, 1883; cf., Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 185.

²⁶ B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 340-41, ltr. Derby to Smyth, June, 1883.

²⁷ Ibid., 342, ltr. Merriman to Colonial Office, June 11, 1883.

²⁸ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 542, 547, 551.

cross into the Free State to recover cattle stolen by Chief Jonathan,²⁹ and Basuto marauders, complained Brand in May, were depositing their families in the Free State and returning to fight in Basutoland.³⁰ While one Boer field cornet considered the border predicament intolerable, as Basutos encamped on Boer farms and, armed and insolent, incited Free State natives,³¹ Magistrate Bailie said that some Boer farmers encouraged Basutos across the frontier and that the native refugees, their numbers decreasing, had paid for their refugee sites.³² After Chief Magistrate Blyth compiled a list of Boers who sold whiskey, some of it poisonous, to Basutos in the Free State,³³ Brand in August acted against his countrymen illegally selling whiskey on the border.³⁴ Blyth further charged Boers with arming the dissidents against Letsie,³⁵ and Cecil Rhodes accused irresponsible Boers living on the border of encouraging Basutos to rebel again.³⁶ President Brand in November prepared but hesitated to dispatch an armed force to the border.³⁷

On March 18, 1884, concerning the implementation of British rule and its consequences, a British Order-in-Council promulgated the Basutoland Disannexa-

²⁹B.S.P., (1883), XLVIII, 354, ltr. Lepogo Masupha to W. H. Van Andel, April 4, 1883.

³⁰Ibid., 352, ltr. Brand to Smyth, May 10, 1883.

³¹B.S.P., (1884), LVI, 526, ltr. Brand to Smyth, July 12, 1883.

³²Ibid., 529, ltr. Bailie to Blyth, July 23, 1883.

³³Ibid., 534, ltr. Sauer to Molteno, July 26, 1883; Ibid., 535, ltr. Blyth to Sauer, June 11, 1883.

³⁴Ibid., 537, ltr. Brand to Smyth, August 27, 1883.

³⁵Ibid., 538, ltr. Blyth to Sauer, September 30, 1883.

³⁶Vindex, Cecil Rhodes, p. 49.

³⁷B.S.P., (1884), LVI, 562, ltr. Smyth to Derby, n.d., r. January 15, 1884.

tion Act (Infra, App. A, p. 221), and Lieutenant-Colonel Marshal James Clarke,³⁸ in the establishment of direct Imperial rule, became resident commissioner of Basutoland.³⁹ Clarke, sympathetic to the Basutos, earned the respect of both natives and the Cape Government.⁴⁰ Directly responsible to the High Commissioner, he held the chiefs to account by allowances and initiated external British control as the price of protection. The Basutos, however, lost their right of individual land ownership,⁴¹ and Masupha still sought independence⁴² and, triumphant, ignored commands of his new rulers, who excused his stubbornness.⁴³

Greswell, in commentary on the British resumption of rule in Basutoland, says that London believed that British rule was more beneficial than colonial administration for natives. As colonial authority in the future undoubtedly would control South African natives, Greswell considers the reversion to British jurisdiction as regressive,⁴⁴ and Aylward indicates displeasure that British taxpayers had to protect natives with whom they had no interest and from whom they could gain no advantage.⁴⁵

Scanlen, in conclusion, offering Quthing to the Basutos as a bribe and

³⁸ Who Was Who 1897-1915 (London: 1935), p. 140. Clarke: Starting his political and military career in South Africa, Clarke served as resident magistrate at Pietermaritzburg, Natal, in 1874, fought in the First Anglo-Boer War, and became Commissioner of the Cape Police in 1882. After his army retirement in 1882, Clarke became resident commissioner of Basutoland from 1884-93, acting administrator in Zululand from 1893-98, and resident commissioner of Southern Rhodesia from 1898-1905.

³⁹ Theal, South Africa, XI, 79.

⁴⁰ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 559.

⁴¹ Tylden, The Rise of the Basuto, p. 186.

⁴² Theal, South Africa, XI, 80.

⁴³ Lagden, The Basutos, II, 558.

⁴⁴ Greswell, Our South African Empire, II, 98, 104.

⁴⁵ Aylward, "Basuto," p. 341.

otherwise capitulating to the tribe, nevertheless failed. Frustrated, and hamstrung by British interference, the Cape pushed final Basuto responsibility back onto Britain, much to the delight of some Basutos, who perceived British rule as lenient. London wanted to rule Basutoland, as before, without the burdens of financial and local administrative responsibility and evidenced weakness by assuming Basuto obligations without gaining control over the entire tribe. Loyalists and internal tribal reforms were sacrificed to the whims of chiefly tyranny. The Boers and their Cape supporters, moreover, were justified in opposing renewed British rule, as London ignored its treaty commitments.

CHAPTER VIII

CONCLUSION

This work examines a significant period of Basuto relations with Cape Colony and the British Empire. In 1883, as in 1868, the Basuto tribe successfully called for and received British protection in order to escape merited punishment for causing trouble.¹ Overwhelming evidence points to a premeditated civil war and rebellion as the true nature of the conflict,² which did not remedy either Basuto or colonial grievances.³ In the confused aftermath of the war and in the complicated peace negotiations, the rebels won much that they had lost before and during the war and manipulated Great Britain against Cape Colony or took advantage of the divisiveness between Cape Town and London in order to regain lax Imperial rule.⁴

Of further significance is the failure of the Imperial Government and Cape Colony between 1868 and 1884 to enforce their rule in Basutoland, causing dejection among loyal natives, recalcitrance in disloyal Basutos, and anarchy,⁵ and making the much lauded and much debated British policy of indirect rule, which applied to Basutoland from 1884 to eventual independence in 1966, seem

¹Supra., p. 1, n. 3; p. 2, n. 5; p. 152, nn. 268-69; p. 162, n. 319; p. 211, n. 6; p. 214, n. 24.

²Supra., p. 20, n. 89; p. 29, n. 24; p. 43, n. 88; p. 57, n. 19; Chap. IV, specifically the first, second, third, and fifth sub-chapters.

³Supra., Chaps. VI and VII.

⁴Supra., pp. 171-72, n. 356; p. 173, n. 362; p. 187, n. 69; p. 188, n. 76; p. 211, n. 6; p. 214, n. 24.

⁵Supra., p. 8, nn. 38-39, 41; p. 12, n. 56; p. 15, n. 65; p. 17, nn. 73-74; p. 40, n. 72; p. 55, nn. 9-10; pp. 55-56, n. 11; p. 60, n. 35; pp. 60-61, n. 39; p. 64, n. 52; p. 65, nn. 59-64; p. 68, n. 8; p. 76, n. 57; p. 82, n. 96; p. 87, n. 132; p. 88, n. 139; p. 94, n. 154; p. 99, n. 175; pp. 99-100, n. 180;

like a reluctant and expedient British ~~after~~thought. Cape Colony had numerous opportunities to depose and replace the sly and treacherous Paramount Chief Letsie, who, by his deceit fooled the Cape Government into perpetuating its irresolute and disreputable lenient policy towards the rebels and added to complications faced by that government during and after the war.⁶ The Sprigg ministry discovered, as an American administration discovered in the following century,⁷ the difficulty of fighting a war to victory on the battlefield and at the peace table when its constituents are emotionally divided, with part, through misguided counsel or mischievousness, hindering the war effort and giving aid and comfort to the enemy.⁸ Britain and Cape Colony together made the fatal mistakes of not coming quickly and strongly to the aid of the Loyalists and later of abandoning those Basutos who were willing to cooperate to at least some degree with Imperial and Cape rule.⁹

Regarding issues of broader historical importance, Great Britain, already thoroughly detested by the voortrekkers, abused, misused, and allowed to be mistreated by rebels the Boer government and populace in the Orange Free State,¹⁰

p. 100, n. 183; p. 185, n. 55; p. 186, n. 61; p. 189, nn. 81-82; p. 190, n. 87; p. 195, n. 130; p. 196, n. 133; p. 203, n. 185; p. 216, nn. 42-43.

⁶Supra., p. 58, n. 27; pp. 58-59, n. 28; p. 62, n. 44; p. 73, nn. 35-37; p. 78, nn. 68-69; p. 80, nn. 82, 85-86, 88-89; p. 81, n. 90; p. 84, n. 109; p. 92, nn. 148, 150; p. 93, n. 151; p. 94, n. 155; p. 101, nn. 188-89; p. 125, n. 121; p. 150, n. 254; p. 178, n. 19; p. 192, n. 105; p. 194, n. 115; p. 195, nn. 124-27; p. 200, n. 163; p. 202, n. 181.

⁷The Johnson Administration.

⁸Supra., p. 51, n. 134; p. 100, n. 184; p. 134, n. 185; p. 141, n. 222; p. 151, n. 259; p. 178, n. 22; p. 179, n. 28; p. 200, nn. 159-60.

⁹Supra., p. 85, n. 112; p. 86, n. 124; p. 93, n. 151; p. 139, n. 209; pp. 185-86, n. 59; p. 187, nn. 69, 73; p. 188, n. 74; p. 189, n. 85; p. 190, n. 86; p. 191, n. 103; p. 202, n. 178.

¹⁰Supra., p. 4, nn. 16-18, 20; pp. 4-5, n. 21; pp. 6-7, n. 32; p. 85, nn. 112, 114-15; pp. 85-86, n. 118; p. 132, nn. 168-69; p. 133, n. 174; p. 139, n. 211; p. 140, nn. 212, 215; p. 192, n. 108; p. 198, n. 144; p. 202, n. 182; p. 213, n. 20; p. 214, nn. 26, 28; p. 215, nn. 30-31.

who aided the forces of law and order employed in the Basuto Civil War and Rebellion without expectation of gain or reward.¹¹ Furthermore, the Imperial Government used its constitutional right to intervene in native affairs anywhere in the Empire as a lever to hinder and discredit responsible government in Cape Colony and thus undermined the authority of the colonial troops.¹² London offered little help when constitutional requests were made yet insisted upon having the final word in Basuto affairs without assuming administrative and financial responsibilities.¹³ The assumption of the financial and administrative burden by Cape Colony, and later shouldered by the Union of South Africa and the Republic of South Africa, today provides the main basis for the mutual social and economic intimacy expected and desired by the Republic of South Africa with Lesotho.

¹¹Supra., p. 76, n. 56; p. 85, nn. 112, 117; pp. 85-86, n. 118; p. 99, n. 179; p. 101, n. 192; p. 115, nn. 66, 68-69; p. 132, nn. 167, 171, 173; p. 133, nn. 175-76; p. 140, nn. 216, 218.

¹²Supra., p. 22, n. 100; p. 23, nn. 102-03; p. 37, nn. 59-63; pp. 37-38, n. 64; p. 97, nn. 169, 171; pp. 97-98, n. 172; p. 168, nn. 343, 345, pp. 168-69, n. 348; pp. 169-70, n. 351; p. 170, nn. 352-53; pp. 171-72, n. 356; p. 172, nn. 357-59; pp. 172-73, n. 360; p. 173, nn. 361-62, 365-66; p. 178, n. 25; p. 188, n. 76; p. 193, n. 112; p. 196, nn. 133-34; p. 197, nn. 137-38; p. 201, n. 175; p. 210, n. 1.

¹³Supra., pp. 3-4, n. 14; pp. 161-62, n. 318; p. 166, n. 335; pp. 196-97, n. 135; p. 201, n. 175; p. 212, nn. 13-14; p. 213, nn. 20-21.

APPENDIX A

ACT FOR THE DISANNEXATION OF BASUTOLAND FROM THE
COLONY OF THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE

Whereas it is desirable that Basutoland should cease to form part of the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope; and whereas Her Majesty's Imperial Government has expressed its willingness to provide for the future Government of Basutoland upon certain conditions; and whereas it is expedient that due provision should be made for relieving this Colony from all responsibility for or in connection with the Government of Basutoland: Be it indicated by the Governor of the Cape of Good Hope, with the advice and consent of the Legislative Council and House of Assembly thereof, as follows:

I. The Act No. 12, 1871 intituled /sic/, "An Act for the Annexation to the Colony of the Cape of Good Hope of the Territory inhabited by the tribe of people called the Basutos," shall be and the same is hereby repealed.

II. From and after the taking effect of this Act, there shall be paid annually to Her Majesty's High Commissioner, or such other officer as Her Majesty may be pledged to appoint in that behalf, as a contribution towards any deficiency that may arise in the revenues of the Government of Basutoland, out of the public revenue of this Colony, such sum, not exceeding twenty-thousand pounds, as may be hereafter from time to time agreed upon by and between Her Majesty's Imperial Government and the Government of this Colony.

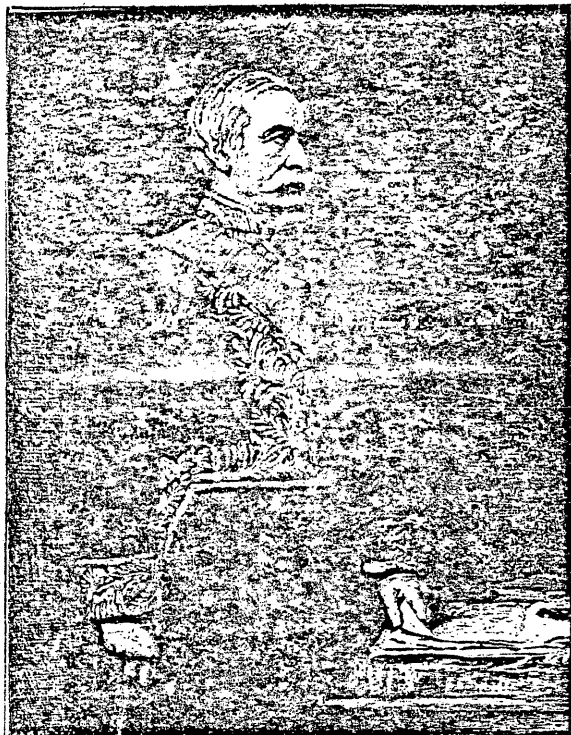
III. This Act shall come into operation when the Governor shall by proclamation declare that Her Majesty has been pleased to allow and confirm the same.

IV. The short title of this Act shall be the "Basutoland Disannexation Act, 1883."¹

PRO. C.O. 50/7

¹G. W. Eybers, ed., Select Constitutional Documents Illustrating South African History 1795-1910 (London: Geo. Routledge & Sons, Ltd., 1918), pp. 67-68.

PLATE I



SIR BARTLE FRERE
Martineau, frontispiece.



Photo by Alexander Bassano, 25 Old Bond Street.
SIR PHILIP WODEHOUSE.

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PLATE II



and Son, Dublin.

HERCULES ROBINSON (LORD ROSMEAD).

Lagden, p. 258.

SIR HERCULES ROBINSON

PLATE III

Lagden, p. 308.

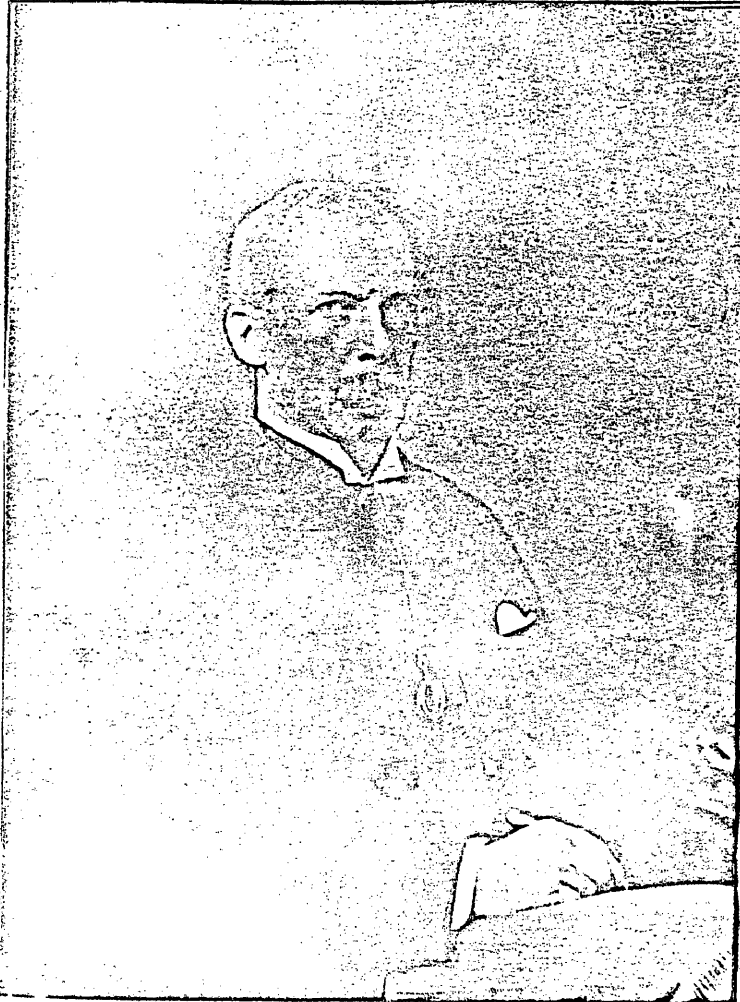
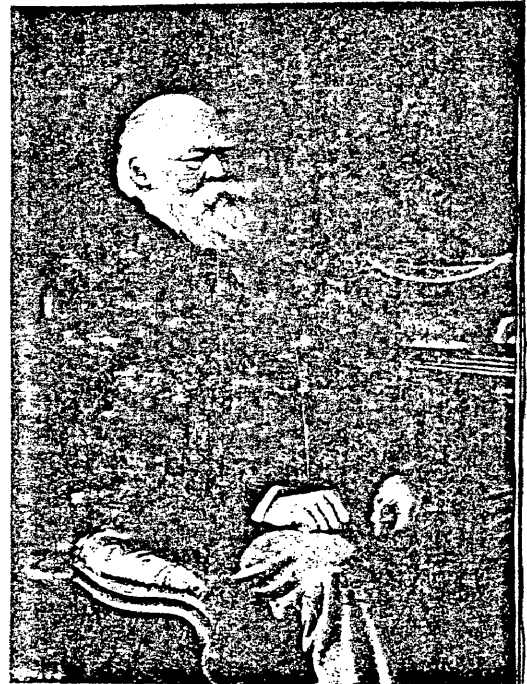


Photo by S. B. Barnard, Cape Town.

SIR MARSHAL CLARKE.

Lagden, p. 480.

PLATE V



Sir John Charles Molteno
about 1880.

From a photograph taken in 1882.

Molteno, frontispiece.



MAJOR-GENERAL SIR J. G. DARTNELL, K.C.B.

Holt, frontispiece.

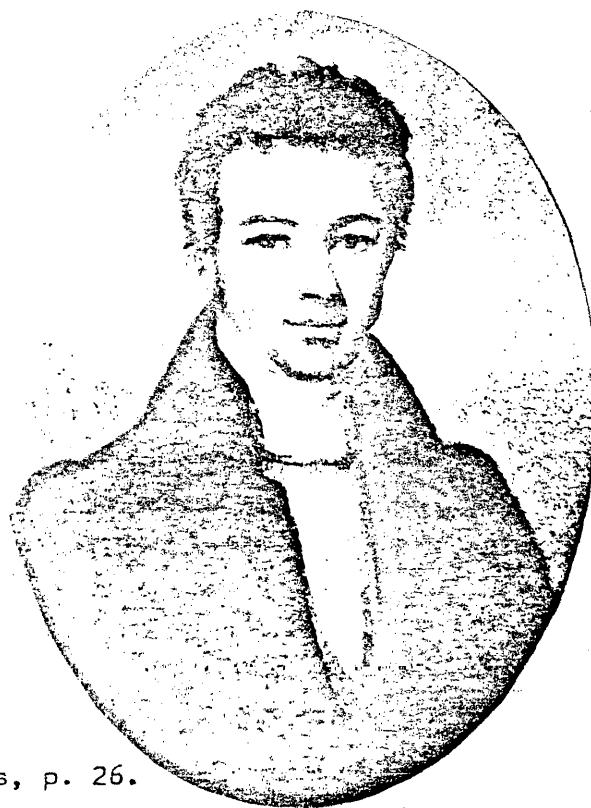
PLATE VII



Moshesh,
the founder of the
Basotho nation, at the
time of his meeting
with Eugène Casalis
in 1833

Coates, p. 26.

PLATE VIII



Eugène Casalis,
the French missionary
who became Moshesh's
political adviser,
a year earlier

Coates, p. 26.

PLATE IX



Lagden, p. 423.

LATE PARAMOUNT CHIEF LEROTHODI.

PLATE X
THABA BOSIGO
Casalis, p. 81.

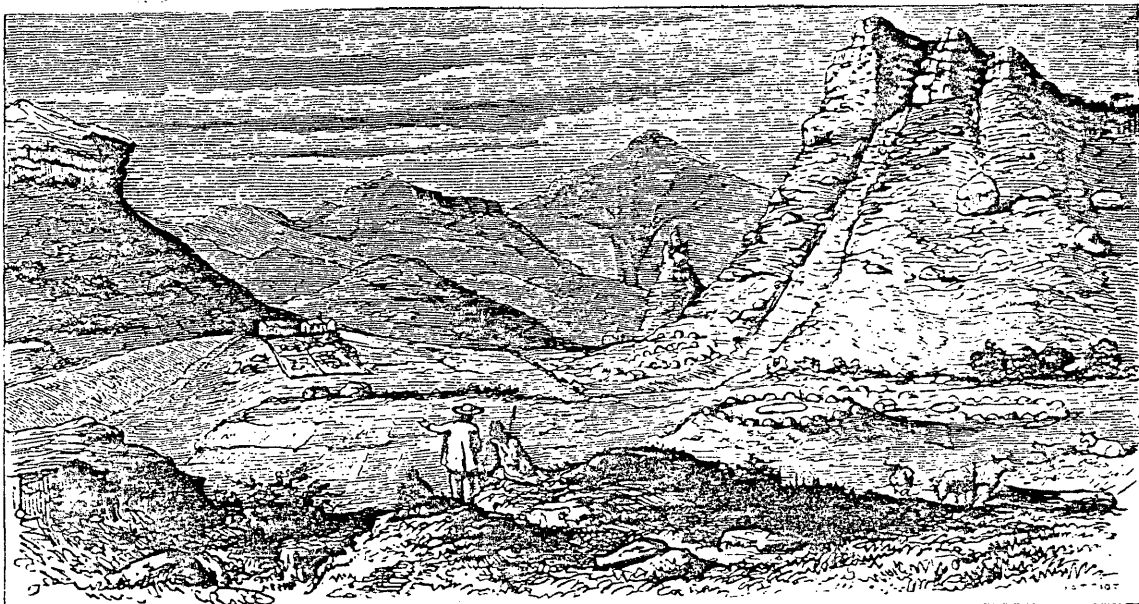


PLATE XI

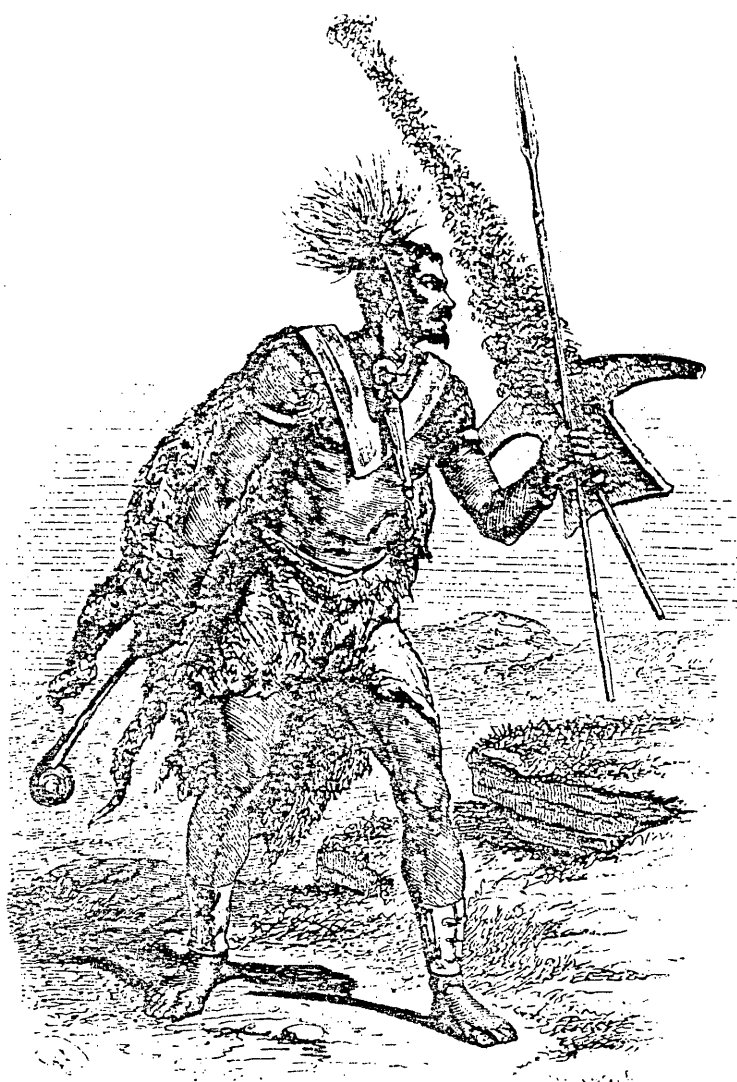


THE BASUTO CHIEF MASUPHA IN UNIFORM, AND HIS STANDARD-BEARER.

Frontispiece Vol. I.

Lagden, frontispiece

PLATE XII

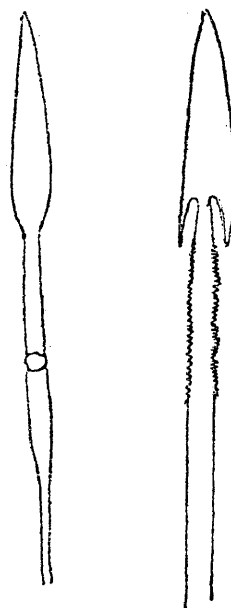


A MOSUTO WARRIOR

P. 63.

Casalis, p. 63.

PLATE XIII



BASUTO ASSEGAIS

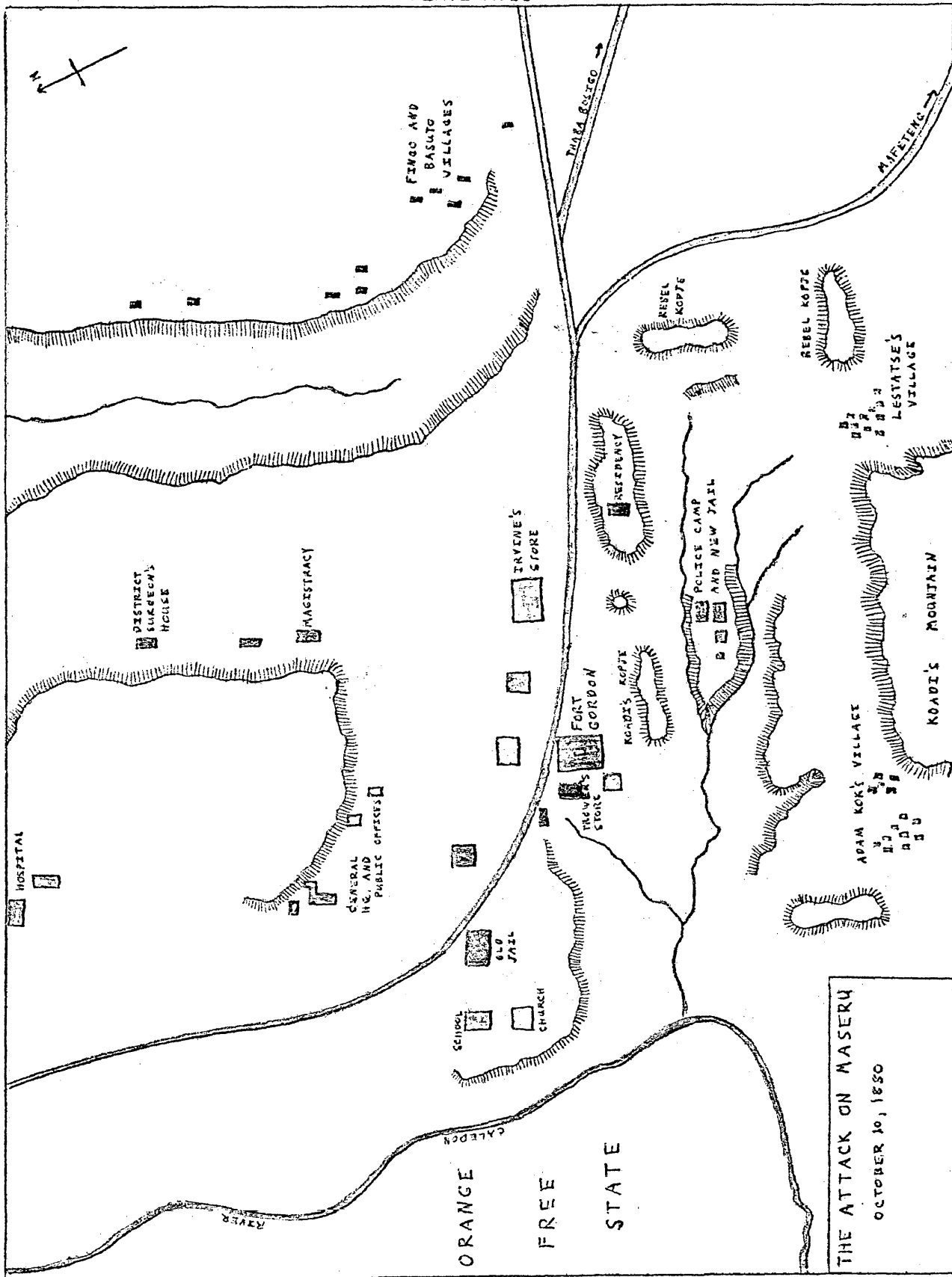
Casalis, p. 132.

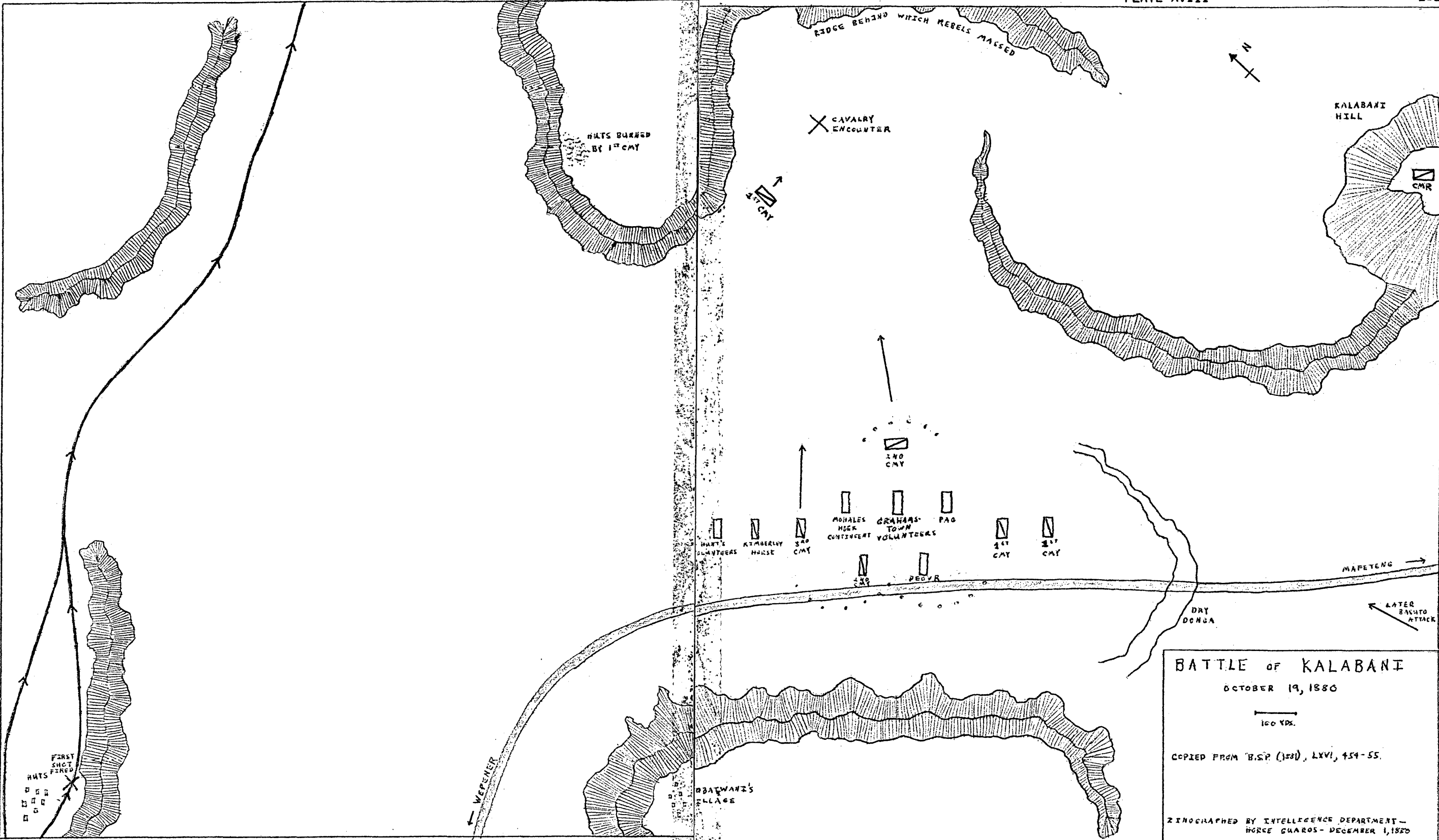
PLATE XIV

MAJOR G. R. DEARE LEADING THE PAG BAYONET CHARGE AGAINST THE VILLAGE OF
LEROETHODI, OCTOBER 22, 1880



Orpen, opp. p. 103.



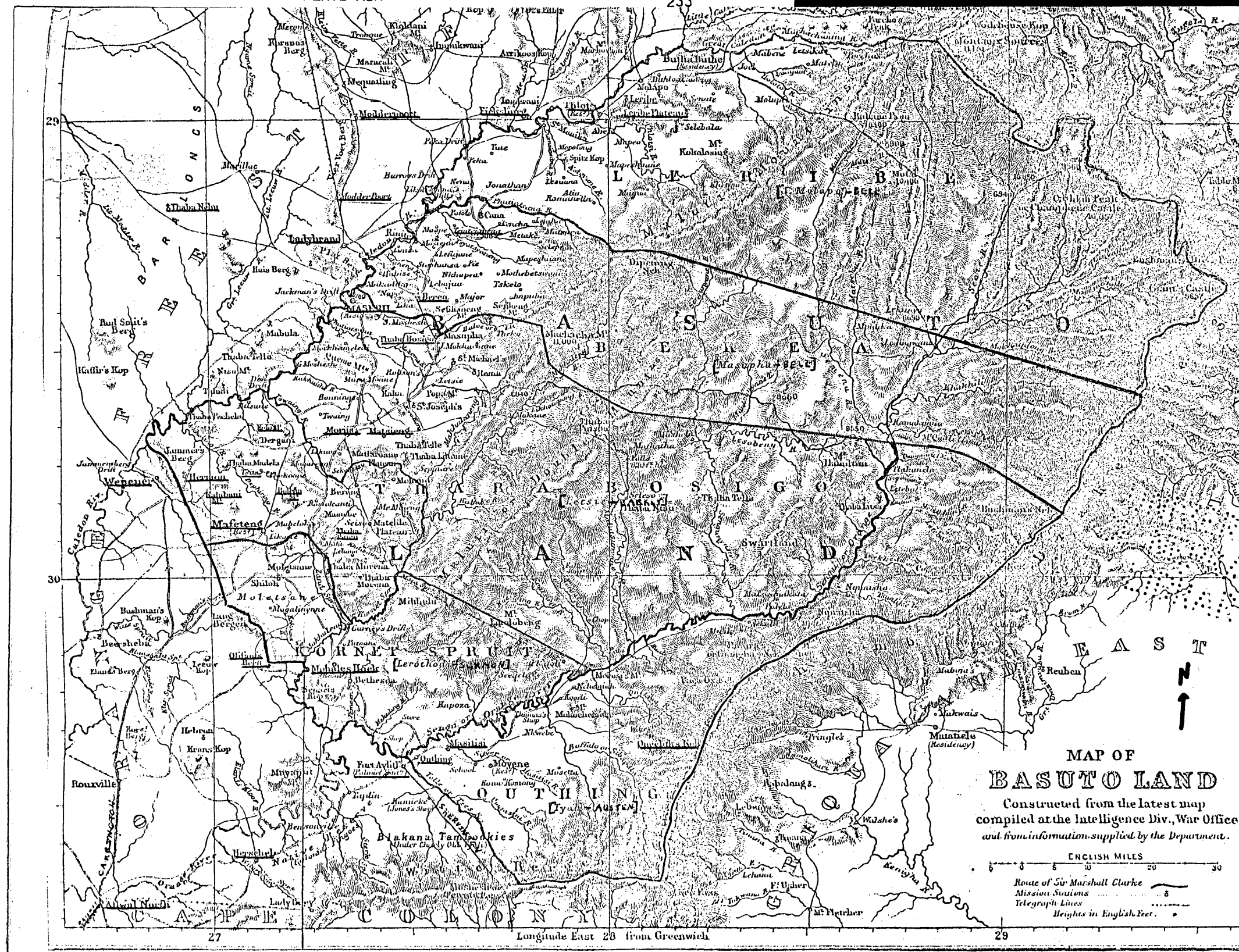


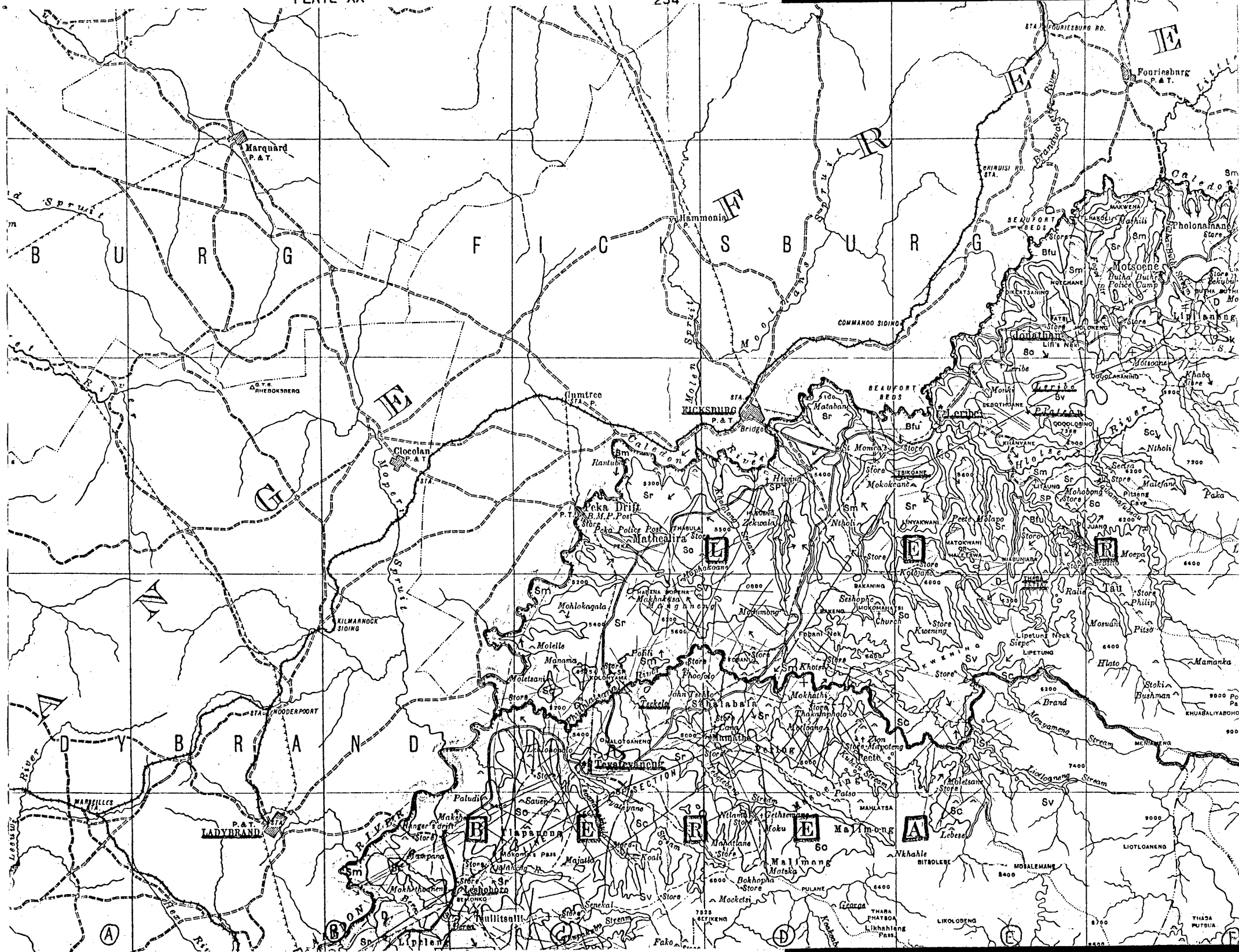
BATTLE OF KALABANI
OCTOBER 19, 1880

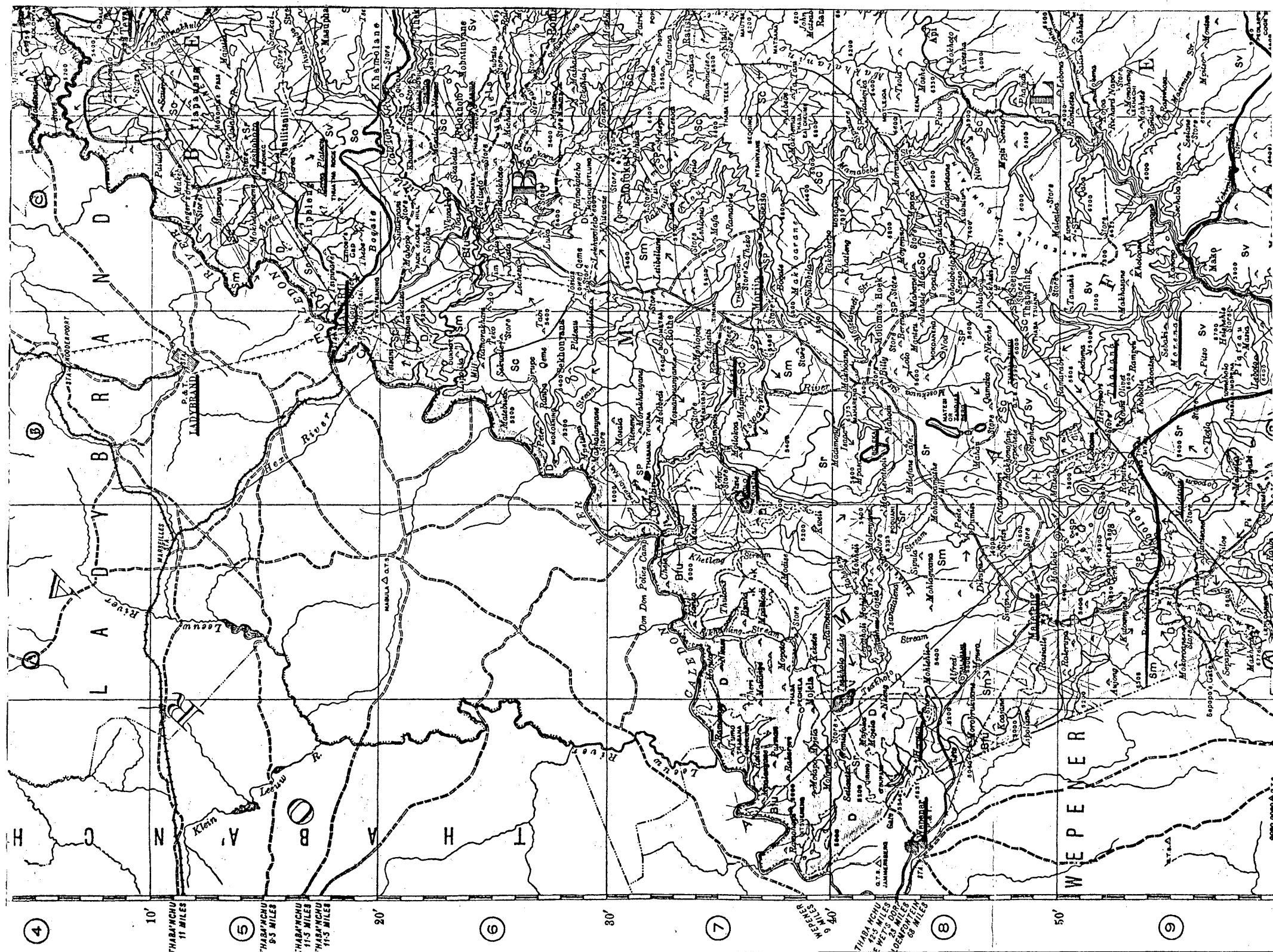
100 YDS.

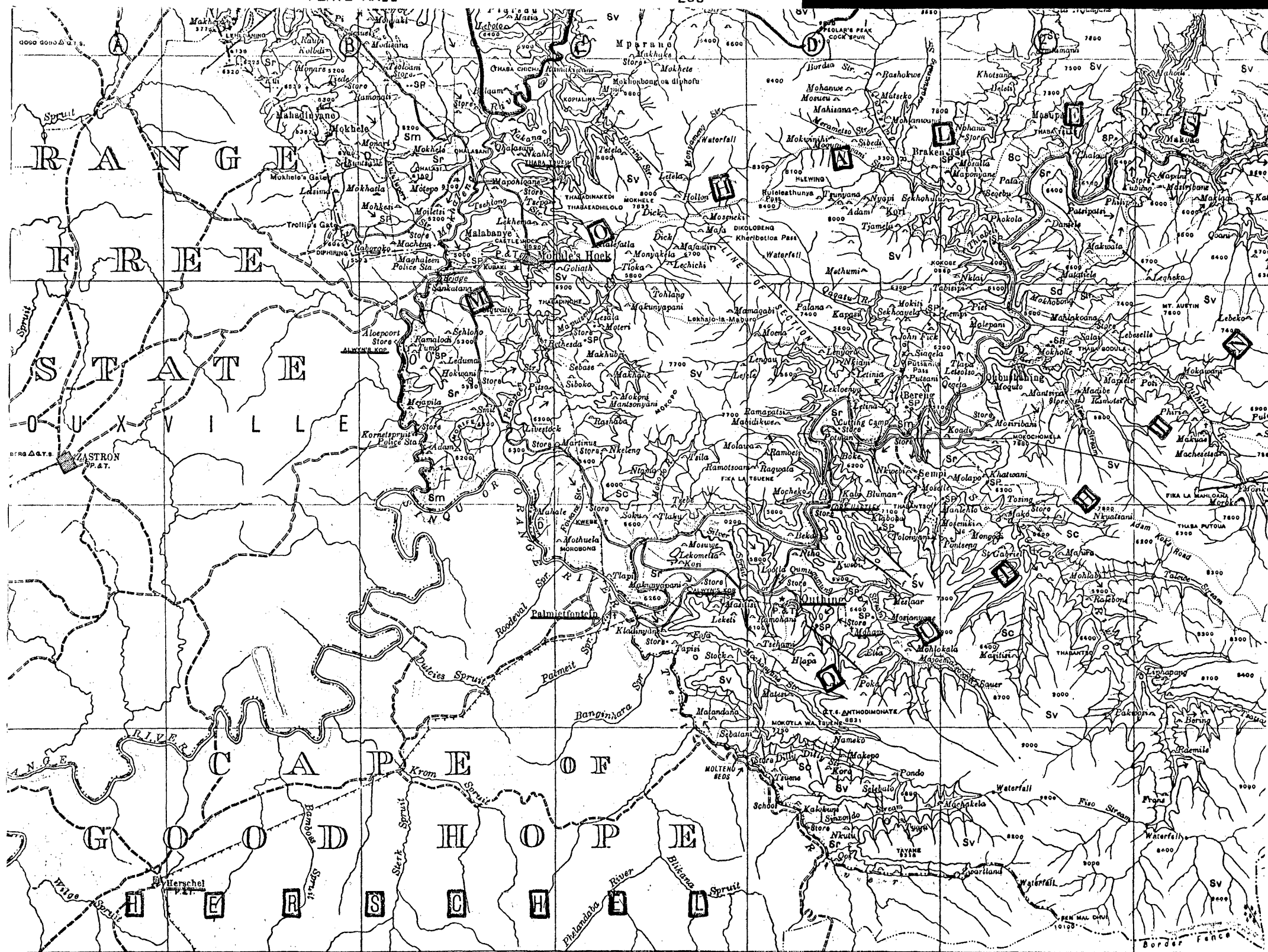
COPIED FROM B.S.P. (1880), LXVI, 454-55.

ZINOGRAFED BY INTELLIGENCE DEPARTMENT—
HORSE GUARDS—DECEMBER 1, 1880

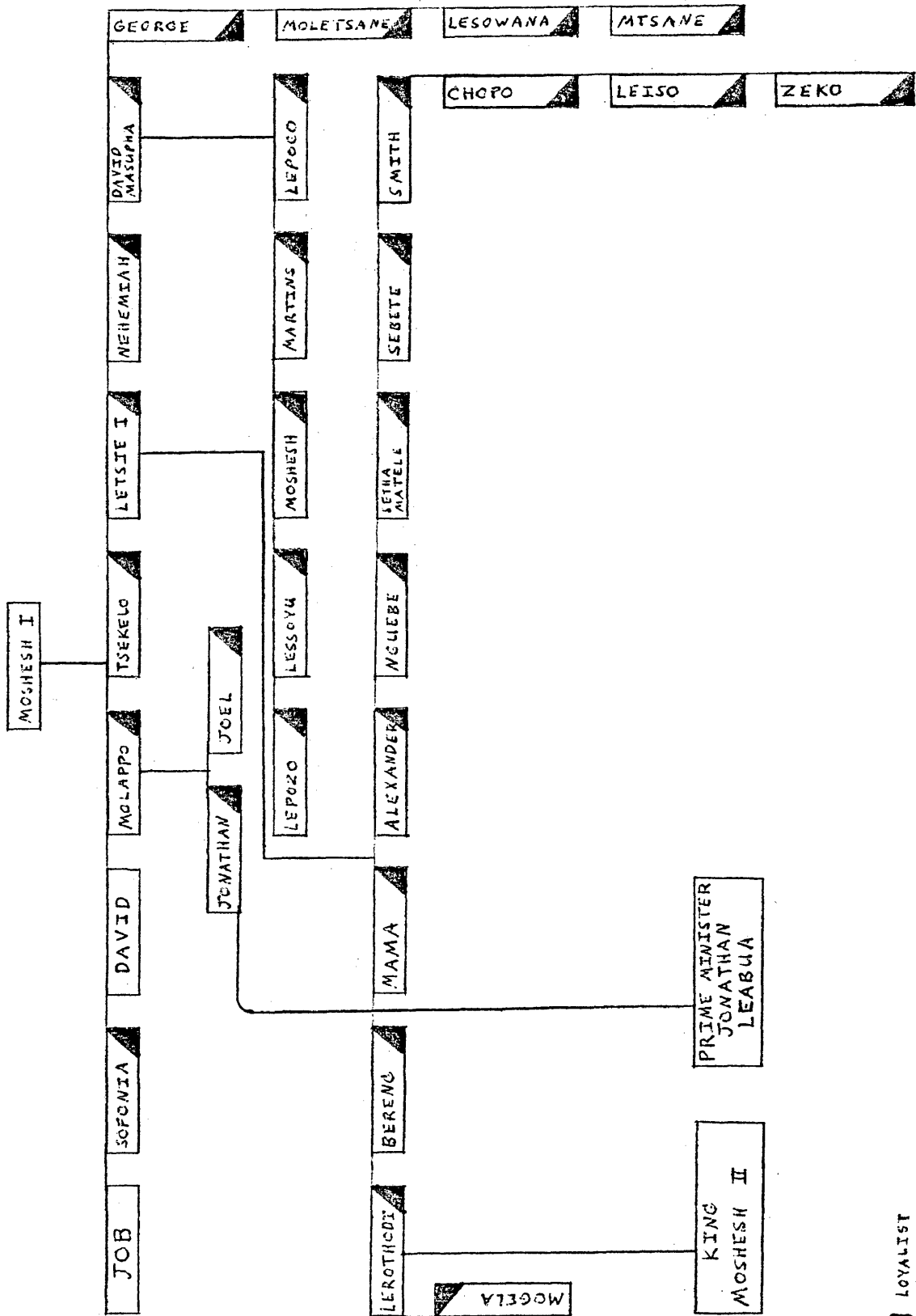








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